











A GUIDE

TO AN

IRISH GENTLEMAN

IN HIS

SEARCH FOR A RELIGION.

BY THE

REV. MORTIMER O'SULLIVAN, A.M.

RECTOR OF KILLYMAN.

"Strike! But hear me."—THEMISTOCLES.

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TO THOSE
OF THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND
WHO ARE WILLING TO BELIEVE
THAT THEIR COUNTRY HAD
A NATIONAL FAITH AND A NATIONAL CHURCH
BEFORE THE PAPACY OF ADRIAN IV.
THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE INSCRIBED,
BY ONE, WHO,
IF NOT THEIR DEVOTED SERVANT,
HAS EVER ENDEAVOURED
TO APPROVE HIMSELF
THEIR SINCERE FRIEND.

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P R E F A C E.

It is hoped, that but little apology will be required to justify the appearance of the following pages. "Is there not a cause?"* After an attack upon our venerable religion, of a character such as the following pages shall sufficiently expose, some defence would, naturally, be looked for on the part of the Clergy of the established Church. Whether the defence here offered be worthy of the cause, it will be for others to judge. The public are fully aware of the very short time within which it has been prepared, and the author confidently expects that it will be received with all reasonable indulgence.

Not that he is desirous that his errors, if he has fallen into any, should be excused or palliated, or that his deficiencies, and of these he is fully conscious, should be overlooked; but, he earnestly hopes that the reader may not mistake the inaccuracy, incidental to hurried composition, for weakness of argument, or imagine, that if, in the course of one short month, he may not have entirely succeeded in exposing the weakness or

* 1 Samuel xvii. 29.

unravelling the sophistry of the ingenious author of the *Travels of an Irish Gentleman*, the propositions contained in that popular work, should be considered as established because they may not, in these pages, have received a sufficiently satisfactory refutation.

It is hoped, that this defence will exhibit but little appearance of controversial bitterness. It may be truly stated, that the author was more anxious that his words should impress conviction, than carry confutation ; and that any little triumph as an antagonist, which he may have imagined himself entitled to claim, was not thought of in comparison with the deep and the overpowering interest which he felt in the spiritual welfare of his Roman Catholic brethren. His hearty desire has been to lay before *them* such a statement of the case between their Church and that which is, as yet, by law established in these countries, as might lead to a candid reconsideration of the great questions at issue between them ; convinced, as he is, that nothing but patient and unprejudiced attention, on their part, is necessary to lead them from the errors of their ways, and cause them to adopt, respecting the Church of England, the language which Peter addressed to our Lord, when he said, "to whom shall we go but to thee, for thou hast the words of eternal life."

There are those who may suppose that the author has been unnecessarily parsimonious of the language of reproof, and, that the flippancy, the virulence, and invective which are not sparingly scattered through the pages of "*the Travels*," required severer animadversion. Against such

censurers, he comforts himself with the belief, that the cause of truth will not suffer because it has been mildly vindicated; and he would respectfully submit, whether, the importance of a speedy, as well as an effectual answer to the work in question being taken into account, he has not judged more wisely in addressing the reason, than in appealing to the passions of his readers. He has not written to gratify the resentment of angry Protestants, but, to satisfy the judgment of reflecting Roman Catholics; and, if he may flatter himself with having so far succeeded as to induce *them* to re-examine, in a spirit of fairness, the grounds upon which their Church lays claim to the spiritual authority which she exercises, he is well content to leave to his accomplished adversary the unenvied and unmolested enjoyment of the honours which are his due for the sportiveness of his wit, the sprightliness of his narrative, the keenness of his sarcasm, and the brilliancy of his declamation.

There is one omission, for which the author expects, not merely pardon but favourable acknowledgements. He has not offered his guidance through the daring impieties of rationalism. For the discovery of truth, it was not necessary to explore all the haunts of blasphemy. Those, whose steady minds qualify them for such perilous inquiries, have a guide, whose rare endowments, and sound principles, must render his escort universally acceptable. Is it necessary to name Mr Rose?

INTRODUCTION.

PUBLIC attention has recently been directed towards a very popular Work, in which religious controversy is invested with unwonted attractions, “Travels of an Irish Gentleman in search of a Religion.” A brief outline of the Traveller’s tale, would seem to furnish the most appropriate introduction for the following treatise.

Some time in the year 18—, a young Irish Gentleman, a student in the University of Dublin, although a member of the Church of Rome, was smitten with love of a rich benefice, offered, on certain insinuated conditions, to his acceptance. He must, it is scarcely necessary to add, if he would secure the coveted opulence, embrace, at least outwardly, the Creed of the Church of England; and to this, when the vision of wealth was first presented to him, he could not be reconciled. The inopportune reluctance by which he was embarrassed, did not arise from any attachment to the religion of his fathers. On the contrary, he appears to have distrusted his Church; and, when he heard it represented as “a system of damnable idolatry, whose doctrines had not merely the tendency but the prepense design, to encourage imposture, perjury, and all other monstrous crimes, he was already prepared, by the opin-

ions he had *himself formed of his brother papists*, to be but too willing a recipient of such accusations against them from others. Though as man and as citizen he rose indignantly against these charges, yet, as Catholic he quailed inwardly under the fear that they were too true.* When such misgivings could not liberate him from the tyranny of "that scrupulous point of honour which had kept him wedded for better *for worse* to Popery,"† it is not wonderful that the attractions of Ballymuddragget were too feeble to deliver him from his unhappy, and (considering the characteristic ingenuousness of early youth) unnatural alliance.

Better days arrived. The "disabling statutes," (which his "scrupulous honour" had converted into edicts forbidding God to work the miracle of his conversion), were repealed, and he rejoiced, as all generous natures would rejoice, in the freedom to lay down the splendid hypocrisy of his previous life, and, without prejudice to his wordly reputation, become a follower of the truth. He had, even in the time of his darkness, "knelt nightly to his prayers, with a degree of trust in God's mercy and grace, at which a professor of the five points would have been not a little scandalized,"‡ and which, if the trust were sincere, forms an inexplicable contrast to the insincerity of his religious professions. Henceforth, however, he is free to profess what he believes. He can discharge his duty towards God without violating the more sacred obligation to his honour; and, as it was not unreasonable to anticipate, the triumph in which he welcomed the tidings of emancipation, was accompanied by a resolution to manumit himself; as, "with something of the ascendancy strut already perceptible" he exclaimed "I will be a Protestant."§

* Travels, vol. i. p. 4, 5.

† Ibid. p. 9.

‡ Ibid. p. 5.

§ Ibid. p. 5.

In his determination to abandon the Church of Rome, the young Traveller was wholly uninfluenced by the sordid motives which had, upon a former occasion, not a little disturbed him. He resolved to seek, not the most lucrative, but, "the most approved species of Protestantism;" and, instead of directing his search to the articles and liturgy of the Church in which he could find great gain, took sincerity for his guide, and determined that his religion should be "of the purest and most orthodox pattern."* His search was not prosperous. He discovered that *some* Protestant communions *did not maintain* opinions which were held by certain divines in the primitive Church, that *all* were not exempt from tenets in old time accounted heresy, and he was unable to discern in the Ritual of any, that attractive paganism which was, in ancient days, excused as a device to win Heathens from their idols, and which, where there are no more heathens to allure, the Church of Rome has still the boast of retaining;* he was not satisfied with the Lutherans or the Rationalists of Germany, with the Calvinists of Geneva, or with various misrepresentations of the Church of England; and, as the only resource from doubt or unbelief, he surrendered himself to an authority, which, for the purpose of guarding the faith, places reason among those vanities and sinful lusts to which the renunciations in baptism should be extended.

An enterprise thus begun, continued, and ended, may very naturally be supposed to have suggested the compilation of a treatise like that here presented to the reader. Whatever may be thought of the conclusion at which the young Traveller arrived, he seems, by his own report, to have commenced his voyage of discovery without due preparation, and

* Travels, vol. i p. 11.

† Ibid. p. 187.

to have prosecuted it with more of ardour than judgment. An exposure of his errors may be of use, if it served no other end than to prove, that in an inquiry, confessedly the most momentous to which human faculties can be directed, providence and circumspection are more necessary than genius, and that even sincerity itself is not more truly indispensable.

GUIDE

TO AN

IRISH GENTLEMAN.

CHAPTER I.

Errors incident to unprovided Travel—Apostolical Fathers—Clemens, Ignatius—Unwarranted inferences from their writings.

IN probable matters, testimony, in order to have its real purport ascertained, must be compared with each of the conflicting statements which it is to discredit or establish. The young Irish Traveller appears to have been uninstructed by this obvious truth, and the manifold errors, with which his pages are disfigured, seem no more than the natural consequences of his forgetfulness or neglect. “From the opinions he had himself formed of his brother Papists,” he entertained the darkest suspicions against the Popery that now is; of Protestantism, his imaginings appear far more favourable; of neither does he pause to inquire if his judgment is correct, while, in a spirit far more adventurous than that of

that such surprise would better grace that class of controversialists, who challenge their adversaries, to deny, that St Paul *wrote an epistle to the Romans*, or to prove, that he addressed any exhortation *to the Protestants*.

Disproportionate, however, to the occasion, as the traveller's remorse and surprise appear to have been; when seen in connexion with the documents which provoked them, they seem still more unaccountable. "There was still," he writes, "enough of the Papist lingering in my heart to make me turn over the pages of Pope St Clement with peculiar respect, and I could not but see that, even in those simple, unpolemic times, when the actual exercise of authority could be so little called for, the jurisdiction of the See of Peter was fully acknowledged. A schism, or as St Clement himself describes it, a foul and unholy sedition having broken out in the Church of Corinth, an appeal was made to the Church of Rome for its interference and advice, and the epistle which this holy father addressed to the Corinthians in answer, is confessedly one of the most interesting monuments of ecclesiastical literature that have descended to us." The epistle of Clement is the evidence that "in those simple, unpolemic times" when "a foul and unholy sedition broke out in the Church of Corinth," "the jurisdiction of the See of St Peter was fully acknowledged." How comes it, that a single passage from the eulogised epistle, or from any similar document, is not quoted? How comes it, that the young traveller, in this abstinence, follows exactly the example of a well-known controversialist, who alludes to the epistle of Clement to the Corinthian Church, but studiously withholds from his readers the knowledge of a single syllable of its contents. When a practised polemic refers to an

obscure document, and relies on the indolence of modern days for its remaining obscure, it is a matter of no difficulty to understand that he is labouring in an unhappy vocation, and one does not hesitate long, about giving his conduct its proper name. But when an ingenuous young man, an Irish Gentleman, adduces, as favourable to a Romish doctrine, an epistle, which, were there not better proof abounding, would be produced as a strong argument against it, and omits the quotation of any one expression by which his singular inference could be justified or excused, it is difficult indeed to understand his allegation and his omission, and to give the proceeding a name which shall be at the same time appropriate and respectful.

The epistle of Clement is, as it has been described, an interesting monument of ecclesiastical literature, and, although it deals not a little in fable, assuming the story of the phoenix as true, and arguing from the metamorphoses of that bird in favour of "the resurrection," it contains many a charitable exhortation and many a Christian precept, but not a single expression which asserts or implies a title on the part of a Roman, or any other bishop, to exercise jurisdiction or authority over churches having their own episcopal superintendant. Beside, it is to be observed, the epistle quoted as that of Clement, is not written in his name. It purports to be addressed by "the Church of God which is at Rome, to the Church of God which is at Corinth," and does not once allude to the office, the authority, or the name of the honoured individual who is its reputed author.*

* It is worthy of remark, that, of late days, the Church of Rome refers to this epistle of Clement as a substantive witness in her favour, while, in times when the controversy with her was better understood, she appears to have been contented with endeavouring to weaken the force of the

And yet it was written on an occasion which imperatively demanded the exercise of every righteous power by which evil could be averted. A "foul and unholy sedition" had broken out. A representation of the evil was made to the seat, as it is now described, of supreme authority. Had the power or jurisdiction of the Roman See been, at that day, such as has since been claimed for it, surely it is reasonable to conclude, that, in so perilous an emergency, it would have made itself felt, and that, after having recited what was to be believed or to be shunned, it would pronounce a curse on all who should disobey;—or, at least, that it would assert for the Bishop of Rome an equal power with that which was exercised by the Apostle Paul, and command that the Corinthians themselves should put away the authors of offence.

Nothing can less resemble the texture of a Papal Rescript or Bull, than Clement's interesting epistle. It is mild, modest, and persuasive, urgent in entreaty, abundant in reasoning, as a fraternal admonition should be, and, as becomes a fraternal admonition, arrogating nothing on the ground of mere authority. It recommends the study of the

evidence it was said to bear against her. In reply to such arguments, as, that, if Clement or any other individual possessed supreme or even what is now esteemed episcopal authority, his name should have appeared, Cotelierius, of the Sorbonne, answers, "Because it was the common wish of the apostolic church to see the church of the Corinthians at peace, and the concord which was evident in the form of the epistle would be a strong incentive." Quoniam totius apostolicæ ecclesiæ commune votum erat, pacatam cenere Corinthorum ecclesiam, a Petroquoque Pauloque fundatam, ingensque futurum erat Corinthis incentivum ipsa Romanorum simul scribentium concordia." Patr. Apostol. The Corinthians were to be influenced by the *example* of Roman concord, not by the *authority* of the Roman See.

Scriptures, "the true oracles of the Holy Spirit," it directs the especial attention of the Corinthian Churches to the Epistle of St Paul, "in which he admonished you concerning himself and Cephas, and Apollos, because even then ye had formed parties," and, instead of denouncing any who should resist its injunctions, utters the following Christian and charitable exhortation: "Who, among you, is generous; who is merciful; who is full of love; let him say, if sedition, and discord, and schism have arisen on account of me—I depart—I go wherever you desire." This is the injunction of Clement, and (instead of pronouncing a curse on one who departed from Corinth, because he could not accommodate himself to the religion of the place), he adds, that he who shall have adopted such a course "shall have great honour in the Lord, and every place will receive him." If this be the language of popery, it were much to be desired, that the modern advocates and organs of that calumniated system, would condescend to receive and to use it.

The other doctrines by the discovery of which, on the first day of his search, the young traveller was surprised and agitated, have, as their voucher, an epistle of Ignatius, a martyr and Bishop of Antioch, whose testimony is adduced, also, in corroboration of the papal pretensions. He addressed the Church "which presides in the place of the Roman religion,"* thus limiting, so far as his testimony can have weight, the jurisdiction of the Papal chair, within bounds, which, were pure doctrine taught in the Churches they enclosed, many enlightened Pro-

* The original of the epistle of St Ignatius has not been found, the earliest copy is a Latin version. The place of the Roman region extends so far as the jurisdiction of the præfect of the city was recognised. Within this the "regional deacons" ministered.—See Baronius Ann. 112—15.

testants would not desire to narrow ; but, to the bewildered faculties of the young Hibernian, over whom amazement seems to have cast a glamour, an epistle, of which the superscription limits the presidency of the Roman Church to congregations in a particular district, and which no where names or alludes to the Bishop of Rome, is read as if it ascribed not presidency but supreme power, and this, not to the Church which it addresses, but to the Bishop whom, even by a salutation, it never once acknowledges. It would be almost unpardonable to dwell any longer on a matter like this, or to offer formal proof that “the Church presiding *in the place of the Roman Region*” is not synonymous with “a Pope or a Bishop of Rome presiding *over the whole Christian world*.”*

“In speaking of the Docetæ, or Phantastics, a sect of heretics, who held that Christ was but, *in appearance* man—a mere semblance or phantasm of humanity—Ignatius says, *They stay away from the eucharist and from prayer because they will not acknowledge the eucharist to be the flesh of Christ, that flesh which suffered for our sins.* “Now when it is considered that the leading doctrine of the Docetæ was, that the body assumed by Christ was but *apparent*, there cannot be a doubt that the particular opinion of the orthodox to which they opposed themselves, was that which held the presence of Christ’s body in the Eucharist to be *real*. It is evident that a figurative and unsubstantial presence such as Protestants maintain, would, in no degree, have offended their anti-corporeal notions, but, on the contrary, indeed, would have fallen in with that wholly spiritual view of Christ’s nature which had led those heretics to deny the possibility of his incarnation!!”

* Travels, &c. vol. i. p. 16.

This passage has been quoted in full, because it did not appear reasonable to require of any reader that he should, on secondary evidence, ascribe to the young traveller such inaccuracy in reasoning. The Docetæ accounted it blasphemy to teach that Christ had a real body, and yet it would have fallen in with their "view of his nature," to join in the commemoration of a real body—given for our sins, a real blood-shedding, and a real death and passion. Had the argument been, that they who denied Christ's body on the cross, must also have denied its presence on the altar, a champion of the Church of Rome might have found the reasoning inconveniently correct, but, to say, that men might, consistently and naturally, set forth a sign of that, which, they maintained, should not *be signified* because it could not *be*, is to form a conclusion directly at variance with the premises from which, by some inexplicable process, it is exhorted.*

* The Docetæ did not all refrain from the Holy Communion. Some received the sacrament not as a commemoration of Christ's death and passion, but as a type of their mystical union with God. This was not unknown to the author of "the Travels," who was aware of another circumstance also, of which he does not appear to have made the use which might have been expected from a young and ingenuous inquirer. He writes, note to p. 177, vol. i. "To the Marcionites of the next age, who had also their eucharist, though believing with the Docetæ that Christ's body was but apparent, it was urged as an argument both by Irenæus and Tertullian, that in owning the sacrament of the body and blood, they confuted their own opinion. Will it still, after this, be contended that the ancient Christians did not believe in the reality of the presence." The reader will be better able to answer when he has before him the arguments which these early writers employed. "Irenæus argues that matter must have been framed by God the Father, otherwise heretics "in offering what according to us are his creatures show him covetous of what is not his

The other part of the argument from Ignatius, that in which, by accusing heretics of denying, he may be regarded as, in his own person, affirming, the doctrine of the real presence, shall be in due time considered. For the present it may be sufficient to remind the reader, that many preliminary matters must be decided before the judgment of the martyr can be thoroughly understood. For example—Did he write literally? What is the eucharist—Does that term signify the visible elements? Does it mean outward participation? Does it mean an inward and spiritual grace? Before the expression of Ignatius can be fully understood, all these questions must be answered. In a word, whether his testimony favour the doctrine of the Roman or the

own.” He contends, that matter is capable of a resurrection, adopting a similar argumentum ad hominem. “As” (he assumes the admission), “bread which is of the earth, receiving invocation of God, is no longer *common* bread, but Eucharist, consisting of two natures, an earthly and a heavenly, so also our bodies receiving Eucharist are no longer corruptible, having hope of a resurrection.” (Iren. lib. iv. c. 34.) The argument of Irenæus not only admits the continuance of the bread, but would, under a supposition that the substance of bread departed, be an absurdity. The reply would then be obvious: since the bread, when blessing has come upon it ceases to exist, so also shall our bodies cease to be;—and to the former allegation heretics would reply,—nay, we do not esteem God covetous of what is not his own, since we offer not bread, but Christ his blessed Son. The argument of Tertullian is still more clear and decisive. “He made it (the bread), his body, saying this is my body, that is, *THE FIGURE OF MY BODY*, but there could not “be a figure, unless there had been a real body.” Lib. 4. Cont. Mar. C. 40. Now let the reader answer the question, and let him reflect on the simplicity of this most credulous young man, who could be persuaded that the Marcionites found it practicable to believe in transubstantiation, although they conceived it impossible that Christ could have a body.

Reformed Church cannot be known, until the doctrine held by these communions respectively has been, at least partially, described and comprehended. To afford this indispensable information shall be attempted in the ensuing chapter; the remainder of the present must be devoted to the other doctrines for which Ignatius is called to answer; those respecting relics and tradition.

“On turning to an account of the martyrdom of this same father, I fell upon a no less glaring specimen of popish *practice*. Ignatius, as is well known to all readers of Martyrology, was delivered up to be devoured by lions in the amphitheatre at Rome. After the victim had been despatched, the faithful deacons who had accompanied him on his journey, gathered up, as we are told, the few bones which the wild beasts had spared, and carrying them back to Antioch deposited them there religiously in a shrine, round which annually on the day of his martyrdom the faithful assembled, and in memory of his self-devotion kept vigil round his relics.”* There is something to be complained of here. The inquiring gentleman professes to have commenced his studies with the five “apostolical fathers,”† and yet he proves the “popish practice” respecting relics, not by one of these early writers, but by the compiler, whoever he was, of “the martyrdom of St Ignatius;”—and because, perhaps, he found inserted in one volume by Cotelierius, the epistle of the Saint and the narrative of the historian, our traveller argues as if the authority of each were equally good: and thus, by the help, it may have been, of legends belonging to the middle ages, or, for ought his reader has been instructed, of the martyrologists of times more modern, he finds a “Popish practice” prevailing at the commence-

* Vid. 1. p. 21.

† P. 14.

ment of the second century, and attested by the Apostolic Fathers.

The confusion of mind in which he was betrayed into so grave an error, would have been more pardonable in one who had not read that beautiful epistle of Ignatius which the young traveller, it is to be supposed, had carefully studied. It may, indeed, be termed beautiful, not because of the grace or eloquence, or wisdom of its expressions, but for the exhibition it gives of that steady faith, and that self-renouncing humility, by which christians are adorned and sustained. But there is a peculiarity in the epistle by which the Irish Gentleman ought to have been instructed. No man can read it, without being struck with the earnestness of the martyr, that his death should be such as must render the worship of his relics impossible. "Entice them" (the wild beasts) "to be my sepulchre, and *to leave nothing of my body*, that so, after my sleep, I may not be troublesome to any. Then shall I be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not see my body.* Had it been believed, when this epistle was written, that miracles were wrought by the relics of departed saints, Ignatius would not have been desirous to withhold from his flock, memorials which interest as well as affection would urge them to covet. It was, however, scarcely necessary to offer this remark. It is not alleged in the passage quoted in "The Travels" that miracles were wrought at the vigils kept round those honoured remains. The practice, which the young traveller describes, was rather dangerous as leading to superstition, than idolatrous in itself, and, if he had compared it with the doctrine held by the Church of Rome at this day, he would, perhaps, have understood the wisdom of the martyr's

* Ignat. ad Rom. 4.

earnest prayer, and the faithfulness and prudence of the reformed churches.

“It should have been mentioned, also, to make the matter still worse, that, when on his way through Asia, to the scene of his sufferings, this illustrious father, in exhorting the churches to be on their guard against heresy, impressed earnestly upon them *to hold fast by the traditions of the Apostles*, “thus sanctioning that twofold rule of faith, *the unwritten* as well as the written word, which by all good Protestants is repudiated as one of the falsest of the false doctrines of popery.”* This should have been mentioned—and more—namely, where it had been found. The expression in italics may be read in the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius.† “He exhorted them to hold fast by the tradition of the apostles which, for safety (being now about to suffer martyrdom‡), he thought it necessary to have committed *to writing*.” Can this be the passage in which *unwritten* tradition is recognised as a portion of the twofold rule of faith, distinct from the scripture. Here it is broadly stated that the tradition of the apostles, so far as it was necessary to the faith, was written. How could it constitute a testimony distinct from scripture? Has it *become unwritten* by having its records lost; are christians of the nineteenth century called on to believe, that they who lost irrecoverably the written documents, have guarded faithfully the truths which those writings were designed to secure; and can the Church of Rome adduce in favour of her claims to be respected as the depositary of unwritten tradition, a testimony, which seems to have no other scope or purpose than that of convicting her of negligence or falsifying her doctrine?

* Travels, vol. i. p. 21. † Eus. Hist. Lib. 3. c. 36.

‡ ἡδὴ μαρτυρόμενος.

The passage from Eusebius has been advanced,—one Reverend divine quoted part of it—the British critic completed the quotation and exposed the artifice. A worthy successor tried it in another form,—the Rev. James Phelan separated the words of the modern polemic from the expressions of the historian, and again tradition was found wanting.* It is something too much, although not without precedent, that this relic of testimony in favour of tradition, itself a tradition repeatedly discredited and disgraced, should have been palmed on the unpractised simplicity of the young Hibernian, and that he should be made the luckless instrument, by whom the often proffered and rejected deceit, with all its brands of forgery upon it, was to be re-issued into controversial circulation.

CHAPTER II.

Eucharist—Necessity of defining Doctrines—Churches of Rome and of England.

THE exposures in the preceding chapter have, it is hoped, satisfied the reader, that, to render the testimony of ancient writers subsidiary to the purposes of religious inquiry, a little previous knowledge is

* The “Catholic doctrine of tradition” by the Rev. James Phelan, displays in a most unpretending form, much research and ability, and will amply reward the student who makes himself acquainted with its argument and learning. The object of its author is to trace out the “tradition” which was in old time had in especial honour, and to prove that it was identical with what we term “the Apostles’ Creed.”

indispensable. We will, therefore, before examining the sentiments of the early Fathers on any point of doctrine, endeavour to ascertain existing opinions respecting it, assured, that, to one but superficially acquainted with the Creeds which are now professed, the Catholic doctrine of primitive times may often seem a counterpart of some modern corruption. We begin with "the Eucharist" as well because of the real importance of the doctrine, as for the prominence given it, and the consequences attached to it, in the Irish Gentleman's "Travels."

When we inquire into the dogmas of the Church of Rome, it is of moment to learn their character from documents of acknowledged authority. Individual divines, and even collegiate bodies who have some temporary purposes to serve, who write with the passion of controversy in their hearts, or the fear of it before their eyes, cannot be expected to communicate the species of information which should satisfy an inquirer, and for which a Church is to be held responsible. It will be necessary, therefore, to ascertain the doctrine which it is our purpose to examine, from those public decrees and those authorized formularies in which the Church of Rome declares that she speaks and is represented. The received and well known belief respecting the eucharist is, that it is at once a sacrifice* and a sacrament,† in which Christ, in the one, is offered as a bodily oblation to the Father, and in the other, is taken *bodily* into the *bodies* of all communicants. Such a statement may suffice where the doctrine is to be received without inquiry, but where it is to be examined and judged, an exposition ampler and more exact is necessary.

The Council of Trent in the thirteenth session passed a decree concerning the eucharist, in which

* Conc. Trid. Sess. 22.

† Ibid. Sess. 13.

the doctrine thenceforth to be preached and taught was explained and defined.*

Chapter 1. Declared that “in the sacrament of the eucharist, after the consecration of the bread and wine, our Lord Jesus Christ, very God and very man, is truly, really, and substantially, contained under the species (or appearance) of these sensible things.

Chapter 2. That our blessed Lord instituted the sacrament to be a memorial of his death—a spiritual aliment of our souls, a pledge of glory to come, and a symbol of the unity of that body of which he himself is the head.

Chapter 3. That the body and blood, soul and divinity of our Lord Christ exist entire under the appearances of either bread or wine “by virtue of the natural connexion and concomitance, by which these parts in our Lord, who is raised from the dead and dieth no more, are joined together, &c.

Chapter 4. That by consecration of the bread and wine there is made a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood; a change which is appropriately called by the Holy Catholic Church, transubstantiation.

Chapter 5. That the faithful are required to pay to the sacrament the worship of Latria which is due to God.

These declarations which are, each of them, enforced by an anathema, are those of the most moment to be considered. They will at once render it clear to the reader why Protestant controversialists have applied themselves to the Romish doctrine of the eucharist as exhibited in the decree respecting transubstantiation, rather than in that which affirms:

* Ibid. Dec. de Euch.

the real presence. In truth, according to the natural order, the first decree should have declared the change which the elements of bread and wine undergo, and this change, of which it is important to bear in mind an exact remembrance, is a conversion of the *substances* of bread and wine into the *substances* of our Lord's body and blood.

The reader need not be under an apprehension that he is about to be beguiled into a metaphysical disquisition; but it is of much consequence that he keep in mind the distinction between "substance" and "body." Had the Council of Trent defined the meaning of these words, it would perhaps have rendered comment unnecessary; but, inasmuch as, employing scholastic terms, it left them unexplained, it is fitting to repeat, that, in the decree respecting transubstantiation, the doctrine affirmed is, that *one part* of the elements has been changed into *one part* of the body and blood of our Lord, that body and blood consisting of substance, solidity and other sensible qualities, and "substance" only having been regarded in the decree. The importance of this distinction will appear hereafter,—it is now noticed only for the purpose of fixing the precise nature of the change denoted by the word transubstantiation.

The doctrine of the eucharist is not yet explained. It is necessary that the circumstances by which the consecration of the sacrament is affected shall also be made known. The Council of Florence had declared* "that the sacraments are made up of three parts," viz.: things as the matter, words as the form, and the person of the priest administering with the intention of doing what the church does—of which, if any be wanting, the sacrament is not

* Dec. Eug. 4. Hæc omnia sacramenta tribus perficiantur, &c.

administered (*perficitur*).” The Missal of Pius IV. and Clement VIII. (published according to a decree of the Council of Trent)* is precise in its enumeration of the defects whereby the consecration of the eucharist may be affected.—There may be defects in matter, in form, and in the person of the minister.

1. In form; if the minister have not the intention to consecrate, or if he take any thing from the words of consecration, or change them so that their meaning is altered—the sacrament is not administered.

2. In his person; if he have not really obtained priest’s orders, the consecration is void.

3. In the matter; if the bread be not wheaten, or so mixed with other grain as not to remain wheaten, or, if it be otherwise corrupt, there is no consecration—if it were made with rose (or distilled) water, the consecration is doubtful.

If the wine has become sour or putrid, or has been made of sour or unripe grapes, or has been so mixed with water† that it has been adulterat-

* See Sess. 25. De Ind.

† The Council of Trent, session 22, prescribes that water should be mingled with wine in the chalice, and pronounces an anathema against all who gainsay. It is abundantly evident, that, in primitive times, water was mingled with wine, although it does not appear that either Trent or any former Council make sufficient provision for satisfying inquiries, that the water participates in the change which it pronounces to take place in the wine. The Catechism of the Council of Trent affirms, that, although the priest who should neglect to mingle water, would be guilty of a mortal sin, the sacrament might nevertheless be administered, and proceeds as follows: “But the priests ought to take care, that, as, in the sacred mystery, they ought to mingle water with the wine, so also that they pour but a little thereinto. For by the opinion and judgment of ecclesiastical writers, that water is turned into wine. Therefore, Pope Honorius writes thus concerning it, “there has been for a long time in your parts a pernicious abuse, to wit, that there is used

ed*—there is no consecration. The doctrine of the Church of Rome, therefore, as derived from the most authentic sources, may be thus stated :

1. If the officiating priest had been validly ordained, to which previous baptism was indispensable.

2. If he had the intention of doing what the church does.

3. If he spoke the prescribed words, or others, of equivalent signification.

4. If the directions respecting the bread, and the wine, and the water, have been carefully observed—

There is a change of the *substances* of the visible elements into the *substances*† of our Lord's body and blood (the substances of the bread and wine no longer remaining), and, by concomitance, the soul and divinity also become present on the altar to receive the adoration which should be offered to God; but, if any of the required conditions has been omitted—even if the water exceed the proportion it should bear (and which has not been specified) to the wine

a greater quantity of water in the sacrifice than of wine, when, according to the reasonable practice of the general church, there ought to be used a far greater quantity of wine than of water.—*Catechism of Council of Trent, Dublin, p. 171.*

* Vel ei admixtum tantum aquæ ut vinum sit corruptum.—*Missal.*

† Conc. Trid. Sess. 13. Canon 2. "If any say that in the holy sacrament of the eucharist the substance of the bread and wine remain with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and deny that admirable and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into body, and the whole substance of the wine into blood, the species of bread and wine alone remaining, which conversion the Catholic Church most aptly names transubstantiation, let him be anathema." Thus the name which is in the decree given to a change into *the substance*, is, in the canon, assigned to a change into *the body* itself, consisting of substance and *accidents*.

with which it is mingled—there is no consecration or change; and the church which declares, that Christ himself is the great officiating High Priest,* declares also, that accident, or neglect, or fraud, may prevent his being offered on the altar.

It is not intended at present to enlarge this account of Romish doctrine, adding to it an enumeration of all the minute circumstances by which it could be more fully characterized, or examining arrangements respecting it for which the favour of antiquity is not asserted. Thus, communion in one kind is confessedly not conformable to the practice of early times.† It need not, therefore, for our present purpose, be noticed in a preliminary exposition of doctrine, which is perhaps as ample as the occasion requires, when it recites the belief, that, where the directions of the Church are observed, the substance of the visible elements departs, and that of Christ's body and blood, together with his soul and divinity, becomes present,—and that, where certain numerous and subtle conditions are not complied with, a sacrifice is not offered, nor is a sacrament received.

The doctrine of the Church of England in some particulars agrees with that of the Roman Church: in some is strongly opposed to it. The catechism, the articles, and the communion service in "the Book of Common Prayer set forth clearly the faith of the Protestants of the Church of England on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The catechism, having first defined the word sacrament, as signifying the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given to us, ordained by Christ himself as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof," proceeds to expound the doctrine of the eucharist. "It was instituted for the continual

* Con. Trid. Sess. 22. c. 2.

† Trid. Sess. 21.

remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby." The outward part or sign is bread and wine which the Lord hath commanded to be received"—"the inner part or thing signified, the body and blood of Christ, which are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." With this the definition in the 28th article coincides, "The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves, one to another; but rather is a sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death, insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, receive the same, the bread which we break is a partaking of the body of Christ, and likewise the cup of blessing is a partaking of the blood of Christ, &c. &c. "The body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the supper only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper is faith." To the same effect a passage in the communion service, "for then we spiritually eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood; then we dwell in Christ, and Christ in us; we are one with Christ, and Christ is one with us." Again, in the prayer of consecration, "Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech thee, and grant that we receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood." Hence, then, it is plain, that the Church of England regards the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as a memorial of the death of Christ, a pledge of his love,* a mean, also, of grace and spiritual communion with our Lord Jesus Christ.

* Exhortation in Com. Ser.

In all these particulars, it is probable, the Church of Rome would say, that Protestant error is only in deficiency. There are other matters in which opposition between the churches is more decided. The Church of England directly protests against a great fundamental dogma of the Romish creed—"Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of bread and wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ, but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overturneth the nature of a sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions."* She denies also that the wicked "eat the body of Christ." "The wicked and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth (as Saint Augustine saith) the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ, but rather to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or sacrament of so great a thing."† Another tenet deserving of note in the English Church is, "that the unworthiness of the ministers hindereth not the effect of the sacraments," "forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority." "The grace of God's gifts" is not "diminished from such as by faith and rightly do receive the holy sacraments ministered unto them, which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men." The Church of Rome assents partially to the truth of this principle, by declaring that a priest in mortal sin could administer the sacrament,‡ but in the doctrine of "Intention" contravenes it.

* Article 28.

† Article 29.

‡ If any say that a minister being in mortal sin, though otherwise observing every thing essential to consecrate and administer the sacrament, does not consecrate or confer, let him be anathema. Cons. Trid. Sess. 7. Cap. 12. De Sacr.

To recapitulate briefly, the main points of agreement and difference between the Churches of England and of Rome respecting the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; it may be said, that both believe in "the real presence," which one creed pronounces to be purely spiritual, the other declares to be corporal also. 2dly. Both believe that the sacrament is to be consecrated by priests in the name and by the authority of the Lord Christ; but the Church of Rome affirms that the neglect or the malevolence of a minister, may vitiate the form of consecration;* the

* I am not unaware that individuals in the Roman Catholic Church deny, that she holds the doctrine of intention in a sense which renders the consecration of the sacrament a matter of doubt. The fact is, that the declaration in the Council of Trent may admit of divers interpretations. "If a man say that the intention, &c. &c. is not necessary," &c. &c. some say, may imply no more than a necessity affecting the minister, that he avoid the sin of irreverence, but not affecting the sacrament or the congregation. As to the passage in the acts of the Council of Florence, it is said, that it rests rather on the authority of the Pope than of the Council, having been inserted in an epistle and not formally decided in the assembly. But this, at least, is certain, that the highest authority to which access can be had, the authority, too, which, when its decision is not opposed, is considered paramount, favours the opinion of those who hold what is commonly received as the doctrine of intention. The Council of Trent decided that intention was necessary. It also declared its trust, that, should doubt, as to the meaning of any of its decrees, arise, the pope would call, if necessary, a provincial or a general council, or adopt such other means as he thought most effectual to remove doubt or restore order. Sess. 25. Add to this that the Pope's Missal, published by order of the council, contains, so far as Papal authority is to be regarded, unquestionable proof, that, without intention, the sacrament is not administered.—"If any priest should have before him eleven hosts, and should intend to consecrate only ten, not determining which ten he intends, he does not consecrate, because intention is required."—*Rom. Miss. De Defect.*

Church of England ascribes to her ministers no such power, believing, that “the sacraments be effectual because of Christ’s institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men. 3dly. Both churches hold that the wicked and faithless eat to their condemnation; but the Church of Rome, in the doctrine of transubstantiation, teaches that the body and blood, soul, and divinity, of Christ are taken into the body of the guilty communicant; while the Church of England affirms, that the dishonour is done not to Christ, but to the symbols of his body and blood. In fine, both affirm* that Christ instituted the sacrament in two kinds; the Church of England adheres to the rule thus divinely recommended; the Church of Rome, on her own authority, has altered it.

CHAPTER III.

Testimony to Religious Truth—Scripture—Fathers—
Jerome—Edinburgh Review.

“IN a sermon which I once heard preached by a fellow of our university, there was an observation put strongly by the preacher which I now called to mind for my guidance in the inquiry I was about to institute. In like manner,” said the preacher, “as streams are always clearest near their source, so the first ages of christianity will be found to have been the purest.† “Taking this obvious position for granted, the deduction was, of course, evident, that

* “Although Christ in the last supper instituted the sacrament in species of bread and wine, and delivered it to the Apostles,” &c. Conc. Trid. Sess. 21. C. 1. D. Com.

† Travels, vol. i. p. 10.

to the doctrines and practice of the early ages of the Church, I must have recourse to find the true doctrines and practice of Protestantism." Accordingly, our traveller applied himself to the study of the early fathers. "Of the scriptures," he says, "my knowledge had hitherto been scanty, but the plan I *now* proposed, was to make my study of the sacred volume concurrent with this inquiry into the writings of its first expounders, so that the text and the comment might, by such juxta position, shed light upon each other."*

At a future day, the world, may, perhaps, be favoured with an account of the discoveries made in the Holy Scriptures by the light thus shed upon them. For the present, we must be contented with the result of the investigation (certainly not conducted by the light of scripture), through the pages of some early fathers. Indeed, it would not be rash to affirm, that so far from having scripture for his guide in the labyrinth into which he daringly and unadvisedly entered, the young traveller must have, not unfrequently, with a felicity, which (if we had not the example of sleep-walkers) we should consider to be of set design, evaded plain scriptural provisions against the errors into which he was bewildered. For example, how could one who had not contrived to omit, as he read the Acts of the Apostles, the narrative of St Stephen's martyrdom and burial, be for an instant embarrassed by conduct attributed to the followers of Ignatius, at variance as it was with the martyr's expressed wishes, and alien from apostolic example? The truth appears to be, that, having commenced his "search of a religion," in ignorance of Scripture, he did not very accurately estimate the difference in authority between the sacred

* Travels, vol. i. p. 11.

volume and the testimonies of men; and, apportioning his hours of study according to the measure which his eye had made, of those numerous and massy volumes on which the names of the fathers were inscribed, and that small book in which is contained divine truth without any mixture of error, he soon was brought to forget his original design, and to think, that, except where the word of God was introduced to his respect by its honoured expositors, he might spare himself the necessity of consulting it.

This was an unhappy error. Had the sentiment quoted from the preacher been properly understood, it would have suggested a very different course of study. It would have recommended the inquirer to consult first the documents of highest authority, commencing with those which were the most ancient; and it would have warned him against bestowing an undue proportion of his time or thoughts on writings, which no Church or assembly of christian men has ever accounted of equal value with those inserted in the canon of scripture.

This observation is not made in a spirit which depreciates all reference to the monuments of the ages immediately subsequent to that of our Lord and his apostles, nor with the purpose of denying to the testimonies borne by early Christians, due honour and authority. As witnesses of the doctrine and discipline of their own days they should not be neglected; but neither should there be assigned to them that high place in deciding controversy to which the young traveller would advance them. Independently of the reasons for which plain good sense would deny them such authority, the ecclesiastical writers of primitive times furnish, themselves, a warning against placing implicit credit in them. The Irish gentleman should have been instructed by it.

When all the leaders of the Greeks had concurred

in the recommendation of one individual as worthy to be second in command, no further evidence was required, that the general voice was in favour of his being first. This is a very imperfect illustration of the authority with which, it might be said, in every age, all concurrent christian testimony would compel a reverent submission to the scripture. Not only is the book of God's word acknowledged to be of highest worth, but it is set so eminently beyond all human productions, as to have no second. It is singular that the praises of scripture, and the directions to be guided by it with which the fathers abound, did not remind the traveller that he was misemploying his faculties while devoting them to the study of writings at best the production of human wisdom, and, in almost all instances, bearing the character of human weakness.

Nor is it alone by their praises of Scripture, the writers of early christian ages instruct their readers. Occasionally they contain testimonies by which, more directly, their own merits may be estimated. I turn from a chapter in "the Travels," in which doctrines are recommended by the authority of Tertullian, and Cyprian, and Lactantius, and Jerome, and other names, and I look to one, perhaps the most honoured of these eminent men, for his judgment on his fellows. He had been presented by a young author with a discourse which appears to have been favoured by his approval, and, in replying to the letter of presentation, in which the advice of the distinguished recluse as to a rule of life was requested, Jerome replied, urging strenuously on the young writer, the importance of studying Scripture. "With scriptural knowledge as the foundation, nothing could be more perfect than his works." "Tertullian," he writes, "abounds in thought, but is unhappy in expression. Blessed Cyprian flows along like a clear

smooth stream, but, occupied in the advancement of the virtues, or because of the emergencies of persecution, has not discoursed of the scriptures. Victorinus crowned with martyrdom cannot fully express what he knows. Lactantius, a flood of Ciceronean eloquence, Oh, that he had power to confirm what is ours, as he has overthrown what is opposed to us. Arnobius, subject to inequality and excess, is confused, not observing due distinction in his work. Sainly Hilary, high raised in the Gallic buskin, and, adorned with Grecian flowers, is involved in his periods and unsuited to the comprehension of the more simple. I am silent of others dead and living, of whom posterity shall judge.”* Such is the opinion of Jerome, regarding the most eminent writers of his own and of preceding ages: surely it is not wise to ascribe to the copies of books at this day bearing their names, and liable to the imputations which exposure to the accidents and frauds of sixteen centuries should draw down upon them, a higher authority than could be justified by the character given by one thoroughly competent to pronounce a sound judgment, and having before him works of whose genuineness and authority there could be no suspicion.†

* Epist. ad Paulinum.

† The mutilations and changes made in the works of the Fathers, by “Congregations of the Index,” furnish additional reason for distrust of their authority. The circumstances brought to light by Archbishop Wake, respecting the suppressed epistle of Chrysostome to Cæsarius are full of instruction on this subject. It was quoted by Peter Martyr, in the controversies of the sixteenth century. Gardiner and others, unable to resist the argument it contained against transubstantiation, endeavoured to shift its authorship to another, John Bishop of Constantinople, who lived in the sixth century. This only made matters worse, by showing that up to so late a period, the doctrine had not

It is scarcely necessary to remind the reader that the compositions of uninspired men were far more likely to be adulterated than the Holy Scriptures. Works held in no higher esteem than those which Jerome characterized were liable to the hazards of accident, or carelessness, or fraud; but it was the common interest of all who believed in the Bible that it should not be corrupted. It was the standard of faith and morals; contending sects appealed to it, and guarded the purity of its text, and, as copies rapidly multiplied and were widely dispersed, it soon became vain to attempt any such corruption of the Scriptures as should be effectual for purposes of deceit. But this is not the place to enumerate the assurances we have that the scriptural text has been carefully preserved. It needs little inquiry to be satisfied, that no books were ever guarded with so jealous care, or,

been received, and Cardinal de Perron boldly attempted to cut the knot by pronouncing Martyr's quotation a forgery. For a length of time the cardinal's expedient was successful; but, in the end, a Roman Catholic, Bigotius, having found the manuscript in the Florentine library, and ascertained its genuineness and authenticity, gave it, or rather attempted to give it, to the public, accompanied by an observation on the obnoxious passage which had not the effect of neutralizing its argument, or of propitiating the doctors of the Sorbonne. They actually cut out of the printed copy of the work the epistle and the comments on it; Bigotius, however, had preserved some copies from their pious spoliation, and Archbishop Wake became the possessor of the subtracted leaves, and appeals to the edition of Palladius, published by Bigotius, in the year 1680, to prove the truth of his allegations.

It would appear more extraordinary than it does, to find a writer, not a professed Protestant, establishing the authority of an epistle decisive against transubstantiation, if there were not abundant proof, that many, in apparent communion with the Church of Rome, are very uneasy in their fetters.

even if we consider no more than the natural inducements by which man is influenced, had such ample provision made for their preservation.

The Irish traveller has taken notice of an additional reason why the authority of the Fathers should not be very highly respected. It is what he calls the "Discipline of the Secret," by which, it appears, that, in writing on certain subjects, a studied obscurity was recommended. The observance of this discipline was not very unlike, if it were not identical with, that economical doctrine, according to which it was permitted to alloy pure truth, and it served to prepare for that toleration of "pious frauds" which seemed aptly to fulfil the apostle's prediction of "speaking lies in hypocrisy," a practice ruinous in its results, and which, even now, disparages the testimony of those who had not with sufficient decisiveness condemned it.*

* The author of the Travels could have derived valuable information as to the merits of the Fathers, from the Edinburgh Review, a periodical with which he appears, by his citations, to be familiarly acquainted. The number for November, 1814, contains an article on Mr Boyd's "Translation of Select Passages" which will well repay perusal, and in which the severest and most vehement animadversions on "the Christian Heathenism and Heathen Christianity" of "those primitive doctors of the Church," are recommended by all the grace, and spirit, and fancy, for which the reputed author is distinguished. "Their bigoted rejection," he writes, "of the most obvious truths in natural science, the bewildering vibration of their moral doctrines, never resting between the extremes of laxity and rigour, their credulity, their inconsistencies of conduct and opinion, and, worst of all, their forgeries and falsehoods, have already been so often and so ably exposed by divines of all countries, religions, and sects, the Dupins, Mosheims, Middletons, Clarkes, Jortins, &c. that it seems superfluous to add another line upon the subject, though we are not quite sure, that, in the present state of Europe, a discussion of

To sum up briefly, the grounds upon which it should be accounted unwise, is one not previously well prepared, to engage in the exclusive study of the Fathers with such a design as the Irish gentleman proposed; it may be said, that the authority of their writings could never, under any circumstances, have been equal to that of scripture; that it must be qualified by the doubts, which accumulate as time advances, with respect to the correctness and authenticity of existing copies of their works; that they

the merits of the Fathers is not as seasonable and even as fashionable a topic as we could select. At a time when the inquisition is re-established by our beloved Ferdinand, when the pope again brandishes the keys of Peter with an air worthy of a successor of the Hildebrands and Perettis," &c. If the author of these reflections be a living man, and would pronounce judgment on the citations from early Fathers in the *Travels of an Irish Gentleman*, he would not perhaps find his censures so fashionable as they were in 1814, but he may rely upon their being as strongly called for.

Again the Reviewer writes: "There were two maxims adopted and enforced by many of the Fathers, which deserve to be branded with particular reprobation, not only because they acted upon them continually themselves, to the disgrace of the holy cause in which they were engaged, but because they have transmitted their contamination to posterity, and left the features of Christianity to this day, disfigured by their taint. The first of these maxims, we give it in the words of Mosheim, was, that it is an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when, by such means, the interests of the Church may be promoted. To this profligate principle the world owes not only the fables and forgeries of these primitive times, but many of those evasions, those compromises between conscience and expediency which are still thought necessary and justifiable for the support of religious establishments. So industrious were the churchmen of the early ages in the inculcation of this monstrous doctrine, that we find the Bishop Heliodorus insinuating it, as a general principle of conduct, through the seductive medium of his Romance *Theagines and Chariclea*."—*Edinburgh Review*, November, 1814.

studied obscurity, and practised what they called pious frauds; and that, generally speaking, neither their moral or intellectual qualifications were of such an order as entitled them to exclusive consideration. "If we could flatter ourselves that Mr Boyd would listen to us, we would advise him to betake himself as speedily as possible from such writers as his Gregories, Cyrils, &c. which can never serve any other purpose than that of a vain parade of cumbrous erudition, to studies of a purer and more profitable nature, more orthodox in taste as well as in theology. He will find in a few pages of Barrow or Taylor, more rational piety and more true eloquence than in all the Fathers of the Church together." Although the Roman Catholic reader may not agree in the praise of Barrow or Taylor, and many of every Church will insist, that the works of the Fathers are underrated, yet it would have been desirable that the Irish traveller, who appears acquainted with the philosophy of the Edinburgh Review, had read or remembered the above passage and the article in which it is contained. It might have protected him from perils still more enormous than that which the gifted reviewer bravely and happily encountered, in "poising down his huge folio saints from their shelves."

CHAPTER IV.

Testimony—Councils—Creeds—Liturgies—Fathers—
Ignatius—Justin Martyr.

WHEN Protestants refer to the judgment of the early ages of the Church as important in the determination of controversy, they by no means propose to have

questions decided by the testimony of individuals. Had our traveller inquired of the academic preacher the meaning of his words he would have been thus instructed. Had he consulted the venerable guide of his early childhood, the Rev. Father O——, he would have received a similar answer, and have found, that the Fathers whose works he so earnestly studied, and by whose testimonies he appears so seriously impressed, were to be ranked as authorities not only, in subordination to the Scriptures, but that there were beside, certainly two, probably three, species of evidence to which more credit was to be attached,—namely, councils, creeds, and (perhaps there may be added) Liturgies in use among the early Christians. Hereafter we shall inquire what these more creditable witnesses testify. They are now noticed for the purpose of reminding the reader, that the sources, from which the Irish Gentleman wished to procure a knowledge of religion, were the least reputable of all to which he could have had access. The task is not the most agreeable, but it may not, perhaps, be unattended by good, to examine the principal witnesses consulted for his instruction, and ascertain, if practicable, the precise meaning of their allegations.

We regard as most important the testimony offered on the subject of the eucharist, because of the adventitious value attached to it. If transubstantiation be not acknowledged, the doctrine of a Trinity cannot be maintained, the same writers having, under similar difficulties, and with the same caution and delicacy, expounded and defended both. By such a terror the young traveller appears to have been continually haunted. Either he must renounce Christianity or he must embrace transubstantiation. There is comfort in thinking that a frightful vision like this, in which the living and the dead are chained together,

and the Holy One sees corruption, appears only in the absence of Scripture. Let us inquire whether, after a little reflection, the phantom will remain, even among the ruins and obscurity where it is said to have its dwelling.

The young traveller seems positive, that the first, the apostolical fathers, in very distinct terms, favoured the doctrine of transubstantiation; that, in process of time, the language of their successors became more obscure, as they felt it more necessary to guard their awful rites from profanation; and that, subsequently, secrecy was discontinued, and the doctrine of the eucharist, as declared in the Church of Rome, openly and fully avowed. It is of moment, therefore, to examine with some degree of care the passages in which, it is intimated, the most unreserved writers of the early ages testify their belief in transubstantiation.

We commence with Ignatius, who, in a sentence already quoted, accuses certain heretics of absenting themselves from the eucharist because they would not acknowledge it to "be the flesh of Christ, that flesh which suffered for our sins."* We have seen a partial representation of the argument founded on these words. It is necessary that the passage and the reasoning to which it has given occasion be more fully examined.

There were certain heretics, as "The Travels" remind us, who were of opinion that our Lord Christ had not a real body, and had not, of course, been subjected to a real death. Against their errors Ignatius

* There are two copies of the Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans, in one of which the above passage is not contained. Both are edited by Cotelerius. The weight of testimony both Protestant and Roman Catholic, seems in favour of retaining the passage, although its genuineness is much doubted.

strongly warned the orthodox Christians, and with peculiar force and vehemence in the epistle to the Smyrnæans, in which their abstinence from the eucharist is censured. I need not remind the reader, that such abstinence could have no weight in deciding whether the sacrament were, in figure or in substance, the very body of Christ. The Docetæ were as likely to refrain from commemorating as from acknowledging the death and passion of the Lord; and, accordingly, it must be accounted rash to affirm, that if the eucharist were no more than a figurative representation of what the Church of Rome pronounces it *actually to be*, the heretics would not abstain from it. The argument, therefore, the only one of consequence, must be of a different kind. The declaration of Ignatius respecting the Docetæ, contains, by inference, a profession of his own belief. They abstained from the eucharist and prayer, because they confessed not the eucharist to be the flesh of Christ. Inasmuch as he did not abstain, he is to be regarded as one who made the suitable confession.

The amount of the argument, from the expressions of the martyr, is, that he and the orthodox of his days confessed the eucharist to be the flesh of Christ which suffered for their sins. A flippant controversialist would perhaps demaud what more is necessary to establish full conformity between Ignatius and the Council of Trent—the eucharist of his days and modern transubstantiation? A moment's reflection would warn him not to be so precipitate. Understood in the sense in which he receives it, the confession of the martyr is very different indeed from the decrees and declarations of more recent times. He confesses the eucharist to be the flesh of Christ which suffered for our sins. What was this flesh? According to ordinary belief man consists of two

parts, body and spirit, the one solid, visible and palpable to touch, the other invisible, and not having solidity. A similar distinction is made, in the doctrine of the Church of Rome, as to the component parts of body or flesh. It is supposed to consist of two parts, the one apprehended by sight and touch, the other of a nature which our senses cannot discern; the one being the discovery, if not the creature of recondite and subtle philosophy, the other that of which all men have satisfactory evidence, and to which they have assigned the name.

The reader may, by experiment, speedily ascertain what it is to which he assigns the name of flesh or body. I mean by experiment on his own mind. When such a term is employed, what image or idea does it suggest? Is flesh something that cannot be seen or touched, something which cannot occupy space. This is not the notion which plain men have adopted, nor is it encouraged by either the Church of Rome or the Scripture. When our blessed Lord would convince his agitated disciples, that he had flesh and blood, what is his proof, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I, myself, handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have."* They must have understood by the words flesh and bones something which could be seen and touched; else they would not have admitted the criterion of sense in distinguishing between body and spirit. The principle suggested here is more plainly asserted in an Abridgement of Christian Doctrine, designed for the instruction of Roman Catholic children. "If God be every where, why do we not see him? Because he is a pure spirit."† Thus, in the words of our Lord, we learn that to

* St. Luke xxiv. 39.

† Abridgement of Christ. Doct.

have flesh is to have something which can be touched and seen; and, from the passage in the Roman Catholic Catechism, it would not be unreasonable to infer, that to exist and not to be the object of sense—is to have a purely spiritual being.

If Ignatius, then, confessing that the eucharist was the flesh of Christ, wrote, as champions of the Church of Rome insist, in the plain literal import of the words, he wrote of a flesh which could be seen and touched, he wrote of all which the word flesh comprehends, not alone of that spiritualized nature to which the name “substance” has been philosophically given, but also of those palpable qualities which are solid and visible, and from which, the common sense of mankind cannot well understand why the philosophical name should be withheld. “The pastors of the church should teach that the body of the Lord “is not in the sacrament *as in a place*, for place belongs to those things that have magnitude.”* The sacramental body has no magnitude, does not occupy place. Surely, then, it cannot be properly signified by a word which, literally, denotes an object to which place and magnitude are essential. Could such flesh, in the words of Ignatius, have suffered for our sins? The flesh which was upon the cross had magnitude, occupied place, was sensible, visible: if the same term may be applied to something separated from all those outward marks to which the name was originally given (at least because of which† it was given), and the language be still accounted literal and correct, why may not the name with equal justice be applied to “spi-

* Cat. Con. Trid. Dublin Edition, p. 186.

† The fact of there being but one name for the “substance” of every kind of body, seems to show the principle on which names have been given.

rit." Properly speaking "body," at least "flesh," signifies something having qualities in which it is cognizable to our senses. It is argued, that it may be employed with equal propriety to designate what, if not a pure abstraction of the judgment, has certainly nothing for the sense to discover; what, in truth, is much more closely connected with spirit than with body, participating in the negative attributes of the former, and having neither the positive or negative affections of the latter; if, therefore, the literal construction of language allowed the same word to signify visible and invisible, solid and unsolid, passive and impassive, extended and unextended being, surely it is little to add, that it may also signify both body and spirit, and thus may enable us to recognize, in the expression of Ignatius, in the decrees of Trent, and the articles of the Church of England, the same doctrine—of a real, spiritual presence.

The reader, however, should not forget, that the great point at issue between the Church of Rome and the Reformers, so far as the doctrine of transubstantiation is concerned, is, whether certain words are to be understood in a literal or in a figurative and spiritual acceptation; nor should he think it impertinent to the occasion, to institute a brief inquiry into the sense in which the confession of Ignatius is to be received. When he, by inference, acknowledged that the eucharist was the flesh which suffered for our sins, did he speak literally, or did he use the words in the same sense in which, of the victim, it was said, this is the Lord's Passover, to imply that it represented or figured what it was said to be.

The passage in which the words under examination are found, must be quoted more at length than they are recited in "the Travels." "Let no man be deceived. Both heavenly things, and the glory of angels and princes visible and invisible, *if they*

believe not in the blood of Christ it shall be judgment to them. He that is able to receive, let him receive. Let place make no man proud, for faith and love are all, before which nothing is preferred. But consider those who are heterodox as to the grace of Jesus Christ which has come to us, how they oppose the will" (or purpose) "of God. Of love they have no care, neither of the widow nor the orphan, nor of the afflicted, of bond or free, nor of the hungry or the thirsty. They abstain from eucharist and prayer because they acknowledge not the eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Christ which suffered for our sins." Here it is contended, that faith and charity are the great principles which it is essential to cultivate and exercise. The faith must be, not like the opinion of the heretics, belief in a Saviour whose humanity was a phantom. It must be faith in the blood of Christ, who, as it is declared at the commencement of the epistle "was truly crucified by Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch, being nailed for us in the flesh to the cross," "not as some unbelievers say that he only seemed to suffer. For after his resurrection I know and believe that he was in the flesh."* "And when he came to those who were with Peter, he said unto them, Take, handle me, and see that I am not an incorporeal demon. And *straightway they felt him and believed.*" "But after the resurrection, he did eat and drink with them as he was in the flesh, although, as to his spirit, he was united to his father." The flesh in which Christ appeared after death, endured the test of sight and touch. The apostles believed *when they had seen and felt* that the Lord had a body. Any such flesh as transubstantiation presupposes, would not have

* Ε'γω γὰρ διημετα τῇ ἀναστάσει ἐν σαρκὶ αὐτὸν οἶδα καὶ ᾤστυον οὐτά.

convinced the disciples—any definition which implied that the flesh of the Lord was of such a nature, Ignatius would have accounted an invention of the heretics against whose errors he was expostulating. Thus far, therefore, it is evident that the word flesh, in the sense in which the martyr employed it, is to be received in the plain signification in which it is ordinarily used. Did he confess that this flesh was in the eucharist? A little patience will enable the reader fully to understand.

In the epistle to the Smyrnæans, from which the confession is quoted, there is a brief outline of what is most important in the history of our Lord. His birth—his baptism—his death and passion—his resurrection, and the proofs afforded to the disciples that he had a real body, are clearly and expressly related; but, unless the passage which the Traveller has alleged be regarded as such, there is not added to the recital of what our Saviour did, that he gave himself in the eucharist. Yet this, if the faith of Ignatius confessed it, he should not have omitted. He writes, that Christ ate and drank with his disciples; he would scarcely have omitted, had he so believed, that he was their food no less than their companion. There was, however, another occasion on which an omission, such as this, was still more remarkable. In his epistle to the Philadelphians, Ignatius institutes a comparison for the purpose of setting forth the superiority of the Gospel over the law, and concludes thus—"The Gospel has something which surpasses—the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, his passion, and resurrection."* Was it likely, if he believed the eucharist to be that which the Church of Rome holds it, that he would have omitted so stupendous a marvel in his enumeration of those

* Ignat. Epist. ad Phila.

graces which distinguished the Gospel? According to the Council of Trent, our blessed Lord appeared, suffered, arose from the dead, and offered himself as food to his Disciples, in the body; and the martyr Ignatius, when recounting the great things by which the Gospel excels preceding dispensations, names three of these appearances, and is silent as to the most wonderful of all. No unprejudiced reasoner will deny that the silence is remarkable.

It should be observed, that, throughout the epistles of Ignatius, there is no passage which could afford the slightest grounds for attributing to him a *direct* recognition of that doctrine which, in the passage quoted by the traveller, he is supposed incidentally and indirectly, to have noticed. He uses upon one or two occasions, such words as the "bread of God," "the flesh of Christ," but never under circumstances which could countenance the supposition that the terms are literal, or at all favour the notion, that his judgment was in accordance with the Church of Rome; and, upon one occasion, he uses figurative language of this kind in such a manner as not only to discredit all such inferences as our traveller has drawn, but to confirm the rational interpretation of Protestants by the decisive authority of the writer's own example.

In an epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians,* in which he very earnestly recommends unity in discipline and doctrine, conjuring the people to preserve the close and affectionate connexion which should subsist between them and their bishops, priests, and deacons, he strenuously exhorts them, "putting on meekness," to renew themselves in "faith, *which is the body of Christ*, and in charity, which is *his blood*." The eloquence with which the martyr constantly

* Ig. Ep. ad Tral. Cot.

magnifies the importance of these virtues, and the variety of aspects in which he exhibits them, cannot fail to interest all Christian readers. His doctrine is thus simply declared in the epistle to the Ephesians: "For the beginning is faith—the end charity. These two, joined together, are of God, and all other things which concern a holy life are their consequences."* Let the reader bear in mind the meaning and spirit of this sentence, and he will scarcely deny, that, not only is it impossible to ascribe a literal interpretation to the expression in which mention of the eucharist is made, but that, by a figurative only, can the sense of the entire passage be understood. Ignatius is warning the Smyrnæans to be steadfast in faith and charity, and to be guarded against the devices of heretics, who disregard both, showing themselves indifferent to the wants of the brethren, and abstaining from the assemblies where the sacrament of faith and love is administered. They will not confess that Christ had a body, or that his blood was shed, and, accordingly, they do not attend where his body and blood are commemorated, or discharge the duties of love which are prescribed by his especial command. They have not "faith, which is the body of Christ, or *charity, which is his blood.*"

I do not know that, before the present day, an attempt was ever made, to prove, that the expression we have been considering should be literally interpreted. The honour of such an attempt was left for our young traveller, and his effort seems characterized by the confidence and indiscretion which were to be expected in so young a controversialist. The abstinence of the Docetæ from the eucharist, and more especially the reason alleged for it, should be regarded as proof that, in their day, a corporeal

* Ignat. ad Eph.

presence was the orthodox doctrine! Otherwise they need not have abstained, forasmuch as a eucharist like that of protestants "would in no degree have offended their anti-corporeal notions." Had our traveller reflected, he would, perhaps, have formed an opinion directly the reverse, and maintained, that no artifice could contrive a doctrine better calculated to accord with such opinions than that of the modern Church of Rome? Could the acceptance of the Trent dogma be urged against the Docetæ as an inconsistency? Nay, rather, would they not have earnestly appealed to it as proof that their notions were not extravagant or peculiar? If, in the eucharist, the church recognised something which had neither form or extension, solidity, weight, or colour, something which no sense could discern, and which was, notwithstanding, to be called "the flesh, which suffered for our sins," and to be so called by words taken in their literal signification, might not the Docetæ justly retort upon their orthodox opponents, allege that all Scripture should be submitted to a similar process of refinement, and that the phantom body with which they would pronounce the Lord invested, being of a similar nature with that which was acknowledged in the eucharist, should not be denied to be that in which he walked while he was visible on earth. As the figure of a body, visible and palpable to touch, the eucharist rebuked and contradicted them; had it been accounted the reality of an unsolid, inseparable, invisible, impassive thing denominated body, it had been that which would most aptly coincide with their fantastic heresy, and perhaps supply them with the most cogent arguments against the orthodox.

An expression in the apology of Justin Martyr seems to have occasioned the traveller still more disturbance than the words of Ignatius, and, if that were

possible, with less reason. "I had but a short way, however, descended the stream, when I found my sails taken aback by the following passage in Saint Justin the martyr." Nor do we take these gifts (in the eucharist) as *common bread* and *common drink*; but as Jesus Christ our Saviour, made man by the word of God, took flesh and blood for our salvation, so in the same manner we have been taught that the food which has been blessed by prayer, and by which our blood and flesh in *the change* are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus incarnate. "The assertion of a real corporeal presence by St. Ignatius, had more than sufficiently startled me; but here was a still stranger case, a belief in the change of the elements, *in actual transubstantiation*; and this on the part of a Saint so illustrious as St. Justin. Verily, they who could send a Christian youth to learn Protestant doctrine of teachers like these, must plead guilty to the charge either of grossly deceiving him or being ignorant themselves."

In this concluding sentiment, I believe all Protestant readers will sincerely concur, and, as our points of agreement are not very numerous, I have thought it not unsuitable to recite a sentiment of the young traveller, in which I too can most cordially agree. Protestants hold, that, in the writings of men, whose thoughts appear frequently in the process of change from paganism to the truth, (who can speak of devils corrupting men by the doctrine of sacrifice, and of God accepting oblations, which else would be given over to demons*, who can derive the name of Christian, from the divine oil with which the athlete of God is anointed†, who can discuss as matters of importance, and decide most erroneously, the thousand frivolous and superstitious questions with which their

* Justin Martyr.

† Theoph. ad Ant. .l 1.

works abound,) although essential truth may be testified, yet the best instruction is not, in the safest form afforded. Accordingly, they direct to a testimony in which there is no error. How desirable that their conduct in this respect should be imitated. Perhaps, if the young traveller, or other inquirers of influence, could satisfy the divines who have most authority in their communion, that the Fathers, amidst all their errors, have none which countenance the great peculiarities of the Church of Rome, we should find these writers soon ranked in their proper place, and receiving that qualified respect which all Christian scholars are willing to pay them.

Let it be understood, then, that Protestant teachers do not send the youth of their persuasion to receive instruction from "the Fathers,"—the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants; but, they feel it a mercy for which they are bounden to give thanks, that, in those writings to which Rome appeals for proofs that her doctrines were held in the early ages of the Church, no confirmation of her peculiar tenets can be discovered; and, while they set little value upon any testimony of faith which the word of God does not afford, they can yet weigh the evidences which adversaries adduce from other sources, and prove them to be inconclusive.

Justin Martyr, according to the interpretation set upon his words by the "Irish Gentleman," bore witness to the doctrine of transubstantiation, inasmuch as he spoke of the bread and wine undergoing a change. Did the young inquirer notice what was the effect of the change? "Of which, by change, our flesh and blood are nourished."* A change

* That the above is the correct translation, will not for a moment be disputed. In the original the passage is as follows: "Εξ ἡς αἷμα καὶ σὰρκες κατὰ μεταβολὴν τρεφονται ἡμῶν."

evidently into the substance of the communicant's body, agreeable to the doctrine of the Church of England, and most repugnant to transubstantiation.

But the bread and wine was taught not to signify, but to be the flesh and blood of Christ. No doubt, such is the force of the words, if they are to be literally understood. Why should they not? Because their author has taught us to interpret them as a figure. This will soon appear. In describing the religious worship on the Lord's day, the apologist writes, that the services concluded with what we should call the communion, in which the bread and wine having been blessed, the element, which is called eucharist, is distributed to the Christians present, and sent to the absent. "None," he says, "are admitted to partake of it but those who have been baptized, who believe in Christ, and live after his commandments, for the gifts are not "common bread and common drink," &c. They are still bread and wine, though not common, or for ordinary use. They are changed into the body and blood of the communicants, and they are also the body and blood of Christ. It cannot be disputed that, if the passage be literally understood, the same aliment "by change," nourishes the human body, and is declared also to be the body of the Lord. It is not said, that the eucharist *contains*, or *conveys* that blessed body. It was the food which, by change, nourished the communicants, which was taught to be the body of Christ. But, as the catechism of the Council of Trent instructs us, "Christ is neither begotten anew nor *changed*;"* and again, more pertinently to the present occasion, "This sacrament is not changed into us as the bread and wine is."† Thus, as the Church of Rome affirms, what is changed into the

* Cat. Trent, p. 185.

† Ibid. 188.

human substance is not the body of the Lord ;—but that which Justin calls the sacred body, is a substance by which he informs us, our flesh and blood are nourished. If his words were to be taken literally, they would not only outrage common sense and religious feeling, but also, directly contradict the doctrine which the Irish Gentleman would deduce from them.

It would be wise in Roman Catholic controversialists, to reflect on the consequences which must follow from insisting, so pertinaciously as they frequently do, on rejecting all interpretations which are not exactly literal ; at least, until they had inquired whether the sense in which they themselves receive a passage, has not as much of figure as that which they condemn. Understood in what, but for controversial disputation, would be regarded as its obvious meaning, the words of Justin Martyr are agreeable to reason and to their context ; taken in the letter, they not only offend the moral sense and the judgment, but cannot, in the infinite diversity of religious sects, find any by whom they would be patronized. All would except the body of Christ from the substances which were to undergo change, and minister corporeal nutrition ; and therefore the figurative interpretation (under it may be a variety of forms) would obtain all suffrages.

But, perhaps it will be said, that, although the literal sense cannot reasonably be maintained, the figurative demands some more decisive authority than has been yet adduced in its favour. It may be acknowledged, that to regard the eucharist as a type of the body which was given for our sins, and the blood which was shed for us, is consonant to reason and consistent with the martyr's discourse ;—while yet, where a doctrine of great moment is said to be taught in the passage, we should be very scrupulous

in endeavouring to ascertain its precise meaning. Have we authority for believing, that a figurative interpretation is most appropriate in the instance now before us? Immediately after the passage which the Irish Gentleman has quoted, the martyr proceeds to recite how the Christian doctrine of the eucharist had been taught:—"For in the commentaries, which are called Gospels, the Apostles have delivered that Jesus thus commanded them, that having taken bread, and given thanks, he said, do this for a remembrance of me; and in like manner, having taken the cup, and given thanks, he said, this is my blood." Hence the doctrine and discipline of the eucharist;—and, hence, the Scripture which Justin recited in order to recommend them, must be the measure of the explanation he would authenticate by its testimony. According to the Church of Rome, our Lord, on the occasion when the blessed sacrament was instituted, performed a miracle, greater and more remote from apprehension than the creation of the universe; and he enjoined on his disciples an observance which they could, without miraculous aid, continue. He directed them to do what they saw him do, *which was not a miracle*; and he intimated to them, that he had wrought a stupendous miracle, *which they had not seen him perform*. This he did not, so far as the Scripture testifies, empower them to repeat; that is to say, he did not, in express words, give power, to make the bread his body, while he distinctly enjoined the observance by which his death was to be commemorated. The powers which our Lord bestowed on his disciples when he sent them to prepare his way, or to preach his Gospel, he clearly and fully enumerated. At the institution of the sacrament, he conferred the power and imposed the duty of continuing the remembrance of him, but the power to work the miracle, which he is said to have

wrought, was not expressly communicated. Justin, then, in the Scriptures he recited, adduced authority for one part of the Romish dogma, and left the other unauthenticated; and, inasmuch as he conceived himself assigning sufficient authority for the entire doctrine, *which he taught*, he must be regarded as holding, that in declaring the eucharist to be Christ's body, his words did not imply a miracle, which, on the part of the Christians, he had not claimed power or authority to perform.

Thus, the Scriptural passage whereon the doctrine of the Eucharist was grounded, containing no warrant for the Romish dogma, proves, we might almost conclude, that Justin was unacquainted with what he did not think of defending. The bread, which was "for a remembrance of Christ," could, without any straining of metaphor, be called the body which it represented, and the commemoration in the martyr's days, and the injunction given by our Lord would, in all parts, correspond. We are not without abundant proofs that such metaphors were in ordinary use—but a single instance will serve our present purpose. We shall take it from Justin himself—"The pasch (or paschal lamb) *was* Christ."* Can we doubt that he employed a similar figure in a passage which must otherwise be unintelligible?

I cannot conclude this part of my subject, without noticing how aptly the testimony of the martyr will apply to the doctrine of the Church of England. The reader may have observed, that he does not say, "The bread, &c. *is* no longer common," but "we do *not take,† or receive*, these gifts." The gifts are bread and wine, but they are received in a manner in which they cease to be common. Thus, the

* Jus. Dial. cum Tryph. Cologne, 1686, p. 388.

† Λαμβανομεν.

Church of England, in the prayer of consecration—"Grant, that we, receiving these thy creatures of bread and wine, according to thy Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed body and blood." How accurately this prayer agrees with the doctrine taught, and the discipline observed in Justin's age, will at once appear by calling to remembrance his expressions. He dissents from the Church of Rome in one most important point, namely, as to the change produced in what is termed the Lord's body, he coincides with the doctrine of the Church of England in that particular, in regarding the elements as bread and wine, and in not receiving them as common; and when we remember, that he declared the paschal lamb *to be* Christ, and call to mind the definition of the Church Catechism, that the outward part or sign in the sacrament is the bread and wine, and the inward part or thing signified, the body and blood of Christ, we can scarcely hesitate to affirm that in this particular also, the Church of England and the apologist of primitive times hold the same doctrine.

Further, Justin, in explaining the worship of the Christian Sabbath, does not, by a single expression indicate, that adoration was paid to the sacrament. Was this to describe the mass?*

* This is not the only particular in which Justin directly opposes the dogma of transubstantiation. The Catechism of the Council of Trent, p. 186, affirms, that "Because the accidents cannot be inherent to the body and blood of Christ, it remains, that, beyond all the order and course of nature, they uphold themselves without any other thing to support them. This has been the perpetual and constant doctrine of the Catholic Church," &c. In direct opposition to this perpetual doctrine Justin (*Expositio Fidei*) lays it down as a principle, that "accidents subsist not of them-

CHAPTER V.

Testimonies unsatisfactory where not fully stated—Augustine's Rule of Interpretation—Erasmus—Pascal.

THE Irish Gentleman seems rather to have coasted by "the Fathers" than travelled through them, and the spoils by which his voyage of discovery has been rewarded, convey about as fair a notion of the scenes where his wanderings have been, as a hamlet at the Land's End would give of the Metropolis of Eng-

selfes ;" and on the absurdity, so strong is his language, of supposing that they could, grounds an argument, which demanded caution and care, and constrained him, had there been any such doctrine known when he wrote as the Trent catechism discloses, to modify his expressions and his reasonings within limits which this doctrine assigned them. There is another passage in Justin's works, in which had he believed in transubstantiation, his belief was likely to be made manifest. The 117th Question, in his "Quæst." &c. &c., is with reference to our Lord's appearanee to the disciples while the doors were closed. The querist, who is supposed to be (it should be remembered) an orthodox Christian, doubts how that could be a body which was so little sensible to the laws of matter. The example on which Justin relies in his answer, is that of Christ's walking on the waters, as if the one did not more than the other transcend the ordinary laws of nature. Had transubstantiation been the orthodox doctrine of his day, it may be doubted whether the question would have been proposed ; and it can hardly be doubted, that the "real presence" within undisturbed accidents, would not be without a notice. The twofold miracle of entering within these closed doors of the outward species, and not appearing to human eye, would be appealed to, in all probability, as a greater marvel than that by which the orthodox were alarmed.

land, or an ingenious foreigner could glean, in his brief interview with a custom-house officer, of the British Constitution. Had it not been for this uniformity in error, the travels would have been the most surprising event of modern times. In the summer of the year 1829, the design to enter upon them was presented to the mind of the young inquirer, and long, it is probable, before the close of 1832 his vast undertaking was completed. Within that interval, he had made himself acquainted with all the forms of protestantism, and their respective systems of defence and explanation. He had trodden the mazes of early heresy without a clue, and returned safely to the rational world; and, above all, with the aid of his lexicon alone, he had completed a progress through the Greek and Latin Fathers.* Wonderful, indeed! in the short space of three years, the toils of long and learned lives, are not only surpassed, but rendered, in comparison with his modern exploits, altogether insignificant. What could have been his art, or who his conductor?

Every reader of "the Travels" may have seen occasion to observe, that their author has been singularly protected against witnessing those proofs of Protestant (or, which is the same thing, though, by a strange abuse of language, the names are contrasted, "Catholic") doctrine with which the early Fathers abound. He seems to have worn an inverted cap of darkness, which had the effect of obscuring every thing but what his conductor, who is also, perhaps, his editor, thought it convenient that he should see. Making allowances such as this, it is easy to understand how the toil of travel could be abridged. Expunge from the Fathers all that favours Protestantism—all that condemns the Church of Rome—and

* Travels, vol. i. p. 12.

there will be nothing marvellous in the task of reading what shall remain, in a much shorter space of time than our young student devoted to his antiquarian researches.

A supposition more germane to the matter we are forbidden to entertain. Many an inquirer into the doctrines of primitive times has been contented or compelled to limit his researches within bounds traced out by the advocate and expositor of some modern system; but our Traveller was not of such. He, like the Edinburgh Reviewer, was not afraid to "poise down the folio saints from their shelves" and satisfy himself as to their doctrines and opinions, not from reports of those who professed to recite their expressions, but from themselves, by candid and ample examination. And yet, through some strange fatality, the selection he has made of passages from ancient writers, so closely resembles those which professional controversialists have, repeatedly, published, as to call for the same censure which has often been passed on their ostentatious and unsatisfactory compilations.

A custom very much to be deprecated prevails, unhappily, among many who profess themselves defenders of what they term religious truth. They quote a detached expression or an unfinished sentence, and are not ashamed to offer it as the deliberate testimony of the individual whose name they have affixed to it. This is rather to play the eaves-dropper than to report fairly. You read over the pages of an author whose opinion you can learn by a comparison of various passages in which he has directly spoken on the subject of your inquiry, but you find in some unguarded moment that he has been betrayed into an inconsistency, and you repeat, as his deliberate conviction, a sentence which has accidentally escaped him, or which you have extorted

from him "by the torture." Who has not condemned practices thus disingenuous, and complained of the uncertainty they have introduced into controversial discussion. It is mournful to think that men who make truth their pretext shall resort to artifices of the same character as may, consistently, be adopted by those who have no object, real or professed, but that of personal success; and it renders the study of polemic lore, wearisome and disheartening, when it is seen to be carried on by atoms of testimony, let loose on the one side and on the other, fortuitously conflicting, and often, as they are mutually extinguished, leaving scepticism behind them.

There was one passage, which seemed beyond all others, worthy of a place in any collection of ancient testimonies, and which, for what reason we are not informed, has not been honoured by our traveller's notice. Indeed, considering the authority ascribed to its author's opinion, the nature of the subject to which it was applicable, the circumstances under which was delivered, its notoriety, and the unequivocal exactness of the language in which it is expressed, the silence in which our traveller passed it by would be more intelligible in one, whose Romanism, (like the great house of Douglas,) was seen only in that maturity of attachment to his Church which forgets early difficulties and embarrassments. The author of the passage I am about to recite is St Augustine, and the subject to which it is applied, is a controversy, in which the main (perhaps we might add only) question is, whether certain words are to be understood in their literal or in a figurative acceptation. It is as follows: "If the speech be a precept forbidding some heinous wickedness, or commanding to do good, it is not figurative, but if it seem to command a crime, or to forbid that which is profitable, it is. For example, "except ye eat

the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you"—“this seems to command a crime; therefore *it is figurative*, commanding us to communicate in the passion of our Lord, and with delight and profit to lay up in our memories, that his flesh was crucified and wounded for our sakes.”* Will any reflecting man say that one who believed in transubstantiation could express this opinion; or will any man, cognisant of the admitted license of language, hesitate to acknowledge, that all those testimonies from Augustine’s predecessors and contemporaries which our traveller has recited, belong to a class upon which a general judgment has been pronounced, in the rule of interpretation which declares our blessed Saviour’s precept figurative.

It is not from any want of counter-testimonies I forbear to insert here a long list of passages extracted from writings in which, “The Travels” would have us imagine, transubstantiation has found favour. The reader, who loves such lore, may find in the appendix to this volume, citations to his purpose. Here I have thought it more advisable to copy the rule which has been laid down by an authority not to be (by Roman Catholics at least) resisted. This may assist in the discovery of truth; the warfare of quotations gendereth a strife in which, commonly, the great interests of the cause are forgotten.

But, in a controversy, in which, confessedly, the decision of the question, how have certain words been spoken—is all important; it cannot be thought impertinent to the occasion to show the extreme license in which the Church of Rome has indulged herself, for the declared purpose of exciting and spreading abroad a spirit of devotion. The Church of England affirms that our Lord spoke, in a figura-

* Aug. de Doct. lib. 3, c. 16.

tive and spiritual sense, words, upon which, literally understood, a certain doctrine has been grounded. To show the propriety of the literal sense, advocates of this doctrine adduce, from the works of ancient writers, expressions which, their adversaries reply, must have, themselves, a figurative interpretation. In deciding between arguments thus contradictory, it is very important to have the assistance of testimony, such as that by which Augustine causes us to understand the prevailing opinion of the days when his light was not extinguished; nor can it be accounted other than a happy provision, if living proof can be adduced, that, even at the present day, the Church of Rome allows herself a latitude of expression and interpretation in matters of the very highest moment, such as should render her advocates exceedingly temperate and cautious in the comments wherein they assume the belief of ancient authors.

There is certainly no term of which a more precise and careful use is demanded than the word "Adoration;" and yet, among the formalities of the Church of Rome, "the Adoration of the Cross" is enumerated. It is one of the ceremonies which take place on Good Friday, and the votary, in direct terms, pronounces words, by which, were they received in their literal acceptation, an act of gross idolatry is committed. We have, however, an authentic explanation of the sense in which the terms are used, and a direct denial that idolatry is intended.*

* A learned bishop, the most Reverend Doctor Murray, thus explained "the Adoration of the Cross" for the instruction of a Committee of the House of Commons in the year 1825:—"There has been for many centuries a ceremony practised in the Catholic Church on Good Friday, which is called 'the Adoration of the Cross,' a term which expresses the relative honour which is paid on that day to the symbol of our redemption; merely a relative honour,

It is to be remembered, that for the use of these words, the ordinary excuses cannot be pleaded. They were not struck out in the enthusiasm of eloquence, nor were they adopted in an emergency, because of poverty of language. They were the deliberate choice of the guardians of the Church of Rome, in a prudent spirit, looking before and after, to the propriety of the expression, and its probable consequences. The ceremony, to which so perilous a name was given, is designed to animate devotion, and the name is continued, notwithstanding all motives to change it, because it is held conducive to the same purpose. How can advocates of Romish doctrine require of Protestants to receive their explanation, and expect that it shall be confined to their own immediate difficulty. What rule or reason do they produce why a doctor of the Church, in the retirement of his study, having, at his command, all the assistance that the combined talent and learning of his order can supply, shall select the very worst word which language can afford to express his meaning, and, rather than alter, shall cover its grossness by an

which does not terminate with the image; but is referred to the great object whom the image represents."

A passage from Theodoret has been frequently adduced by Protestants, to prove, that the substance of the elements remains after consecration. The meaning of the passage is too clear to admit of dispute, and it is too well known to justify insertion here; but a term is employed in it, which one class of reasoners translate as "revere," Roman Catholics (whose boldness is least tempered by caution) "adore," a word which seems to denote an idea very different indeed from that which the Greek *αποσκυνεύειν* signifies. If Doctor Murray's version of "adoration" had been remembered, Roman Catholics would not have urged, as a point in their favour, Theodoret's supposed application of the term, or Protestants would have convinced them that it did not affect the argument.

arbitrary interpretation ; and, if an orator of ancient times, eager to animate or subdue his audience, labouring under the difficulty of expression, which high thought and strong emotion have caused every speaker to experience, has passed the very delicate line which separates justice from exaggeration, why he shall be chained down to the precise term he may have used, and not permitted, by parallel passages in his own discourses, to explain his meaning ?

The expressions in which the Sacrament of the Lord's supper is declared to be a sign or symbol of a sacrificial offering, were too numerous to have passed unobserved, and too distinct to admit of misinterpretation. Accordingly, a method has been devised to evade the argument they advanced, by which our Traveller appears to have been led astray. It is this ; the sacrament is both a figure and a reality of the same thing, itself and the figure of itself ; certainly it has not lost its shadow. " In a certain sense, and as far as it does not affect or qualify the belief in a real presence, the Catholic may, with perfect consistency, apply the words figure or symbol to the eucharist, seeing that every sacrament as such, must be an outward sign, and, consequently, a figure or symbol. In this sense it is that Pascal understands the terms in question, used by the Father ; and as the view taken by so great a man of an article of faith so disputed, cannot but be interesting, I shall here transcribe his own characteristically clear words : " *Nous croyons que la substance du pain étant changée en celle du corps de notre Seigneur Jésus Christ, il est présent réellement au* Saint Sacrement. Voilà une des vérités. Une autre est que ce sacrement est aussi une figure de la croix & de la gloire, & une commémora-*

* *to* (not *in*). The choice of such a preposition is, at least, remarkable.

tion des deux. Voilà la foi Catholique, qui comprend ces deux vérités qui semblent opposées.” In fine, Pascal concludes with respect to the opponents of his doctrine, that they hold the sacrament to be figurative, and so far are not heretics, but that they deny the real presence, and in this their heresy consists. “Enfin,” ils nient la presence réelle, & en cela ils sont herétiques.* It is very remarkable that, throughout the entire passage, there is nothing which implies Pascal’s belief in transubstantiation, nor is there a single expression from which any degree of ingenuity could deduce a plausible inference that Pascal ranked among heresies, the belief in “an outward and visible sign,” and, “as the inward and spiritual grace,” communion of the body and blood of Christ. In truth, it is only with the doctrine of the Church of England the sentiment of Pascal coincides. The sacraments have symbols for the senses, real grace for the spirit; and all who bear in mind the simple rule of reasoning, that more causes are not to be assigned for any phenomena than are true and sufficient to account for them, will soon become persuaded, that, when the Church of Rome admits the sacrament to be a sign or figure, she deprives herself of all testimony, that the real presence, with which it is blessed and dignified, can be other than spiritual.

May I be permitted here to observe, that it demands all my reliance on the ingenuousness of the author, to believe that he did not purpose to betray the cause of which he professed himself a defender. If, indeed, it was his object to show that the faith of Rome is not what it is commonly considered, or that the doctrines which were held in ancient Ireland†, are not what are now received by the majority of her people, his conduct is intelligible; but if he were

* Travels, &c. vol. i. p. 87.

† Travels, Dedication.

really desirous to be esteemed the advocate of transubstantiation, the passages which he has selected from Pascal and Erasmus, appear strangely at variance with his professions. That members of the Church of Rome believed in her doctrines could add nothing to the evidence of her truth, but that they should disbelieve, must be considered as very strong (if not altogether conclusive) testimony against her. Let the reader weigh well our Traveller's citations from the works of Pascal and Erasmus, writers whom he very highly and most deservedly eulogises, and whom he supposes to have testified their faith in the manner following :

“The state of Christians, as Cardinal du Perron, in accordance with the opinions of the Fathers, remarks, holds a middle state between the place of the Blessed and that of the Jews. The Blessed possess Jesus Christ really without figure or veil. The Jews possessed of Christ only the figures and the veils ; such were the manna and the paschal lamb ; and the Christians possess Jesus Christ in the eucharist, veritably and really, but still covered with a veil. Thus is the eucharist completely suited to the state of faith in which we are placed, since it contains Christ within it really, but still Christ veiled. Inso-much that this state would be destroyed, were Christ not really under the species of bread and wine, as the heretics pretend, and it would be also destroyed, did we receive him unveiled as they do in heaven ; seeing that this would be to confound our state, in the former case, with that of Judaism, in the latter, with that of glory.”* Thus far Pascal. The passage from Erasmus is to the same effect. “Since the ancients to whom the Church, not without reason, gives so much authority, are all agreed in opinion,

* Travels, vol. i. p. 144.

that the true substance of the body and blood of Jesus is in the eucharist, since in addition to all this, has been added the constant authority of the synods, and so perfect an agreement of the Christian world, let us also agree with them in this heavenly mystery, and let us receive here below, the bread and the chalice of the Lord, in the veil of the species, *until we eat and drink him without veil in the kingdom of God.*"

Will any man impute, to either of these eminent writers, the monstrous blasphemy, which the above words, in italics, literally interpreted signify; that the fiction of Prometheus is to be realized in heaven, and that the redeemed of Jesus are the vultures by whom he shall be perpetually preyed upon? No, "to eat and drink" in heaven are, confessedly, terms denoting that spiritual gladness and refreshment which the blessed enjoy in the presence of the Lord and Saviour. And how does this differ from the participation in the eucharist? In heaven it is without veil. In other respects, participation in the sacrament, and that which glorified spirits enjoy, are the same. As, therefore, the communion enjoyed by spirits of just men made perfect is not a fleshly banquet, although it is described in terms by which literally understood, that gross and blasphemous participation would be implied, neither should so offensive an idea be annexed to the same words when applied to the sacrament of the Lord's supper; and, as the distinction marked between the state of the Jews and that of the Christians proves, that Pascal accounted the eucharist to be more than a mere figure, so does his comparison of the Christian condition with that of the blessed in heaven also prove, that he believed in something very different from the doctrine of transubstantiation.

This great man and the illustrious associate whom

our traveller assigns him had not indeed cast away all the ensigns of an unscriptural Church, but they appear to have combatted against her most pernicious doctrines,

Cauti “ clypeos, mentitaque tela
Agnocunt, atque ora sono discordia signant.”

CHAPTER VI.

Discipline of the Secret—Calumnies against early Christians—Impostures of Heretics.

THE cloud of witnesses which, in truth, only darkens counsel, when, instead of testimony, they offer no more than casual and unguarded expressions, may be suffered to pass away. If the reader please to exercise his judgment, he is furnished with a mean whereby he can try every passage in which the Traveller seems to imagine he has found transubstantiation, and in which a more experienced observer, whether he followed or neglected Augustine's rule, whether he received the expressions figuratively or in the letter, would find that there was decided variance from the decrees of Trent. But there are difficulties of greater moment. Although “The Travels” are, to a considerable extent made up of those traditional subtleties in which the champions of the Church of Rome are careful to prove themselves, like their Church, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, the young inquirer, under the influence of his temporary protestantism, had been seduced into an exercise of original thought which has shown itself in his composition. If he has brought to the

field of controversy, the confuted arguments of his predecessors, he has at least consulted his own judgment, and displayed the resources of his own genius, in the mode of disposing them, and he has created, if not the reality, the semblance of difficulties, such as challenge to themselves more attention, than, under less skilful management, his materials of defence would have demanded.

The doctrine of "the secret" serves a double purpose. It suggests a reasonable excuse for any deficiencies which may be observed in the proofs offered on behalf of transubstantiation, and it is, itself, converted into a substantive evidence that the doctrine is not new. How could greater clearness have been expected in the writings of men who were so restrained? Could any dogma, less awful and mysterious than that of the Romish eucharist, have imposed the necessity of such a silence?

It is not easy, as our Traveller observes*, to ascertain the precise time at which this silence was first enjoined or practised, but, it appears, that, about the end of the second century, it began to be rigidly enforced. Tertullian†, he informs us, was the first of the early writers who became, in his notices of the great mystery, complex and ambiguous. It was an inauspicious commencement. Whether, at the time when his manner changed, Tertullian was a heretic, or if disingenuousness was the precursor of his errors, we are not instructed. We learn no more from the young inquirer, than that the discipline of the secret was first made of consequence by one in whom heresy found a champion. Up to his time, there was little concealment among Christian teachers,—nor have we been taught clearly, to know why it ever became necessary.

* Travels, vol. i. p. 96.

† Ibid. 95.

Persecutions from the heathen, persecutions by false brethren, persecutions because of calumny had been previously endured, and it was not by subtleties or concealment they had been mitigated or averted. It is not easy to discern what sudden and urgent affliction or embarrassment called for a departure from the simplicity of former practice ; and the difficulty is not lessened by any thing in the temper or the character of the individual with whom the secrecy is said to have originated.

But the most remarkable circumstance in this affair of "the secret," is, that the young Traveller's testimonies are almost all gleaned from writers immediately under its influence. Five apostolic Fathers, various eminent Christians lived and wrote before those days when the enunciation of doctrine became complicated and ambiguous. With the exception of two passages, which the reader has already seen, the age of candour was unproductive ; and no sooner is it laid down as a rule, that the doctrine of the eucharist must not be openly and clearly taught, than there is said to be discovered in the manner of disguising it, arguments favourable to transubstantiation. Nor is it less worthy of remark, that all these testimonies are extracted from documents which the necessities of the secret should have disparaged ; while, in the only memorials wherein information could have been found, it does not appear that the young Traveller ever sought assistance or instruction.

It need scarcely be remarked, that, from the time in which it is considered a solemn duty to disguise or conceal religious truth, the testimony of all who are bound by so unchristian an obligation, ceases to be valuable. It is, therefore, of much consequence to have a witness to which (as we turn from imperfect or ambiguous definitions, at best, because of the

fatal obligation, suspicious and unsatisfactory,) we can apply for exact and sufficient information. Such a witness God has been pleased to raise up and preserve for his people in the scripture. There was another witness. A rule of faith had been agreed upon by ecclesiastical teachers, embracing the great articles which Christian men were bound to know and believe. Tertullian recites it, Irenæus recites it, Clement and Ignatius, indeed it might be said all the primitive Fathers, bear testimony, in some form, to its fulness and truth. It was named the Tradition, and was that summary of belief, which, even where writing was unknown, barbarous nations preserved in their hearts and memories.

The young Traveller was aware of the existence of one of these formularies, and with it, in all its leading doctrines, the others coincided. "The Apostles' Creed," he writes, "is supposed to have been one of the signs of the secret, by which the initiated or baptised knew each other, and to have thence derived the designation of *symbol*.*—See Hist. of Apostles' Creed." Here, it might be said, was the ark in which doctrine was deposited, and in which it should be preserved, so long as the tyranny of the secret threw discredit over the more popular writings. Here was a document protected by a two-fold security—its concealment from all but the initiated, and the precision and brevity successfully studied in its compilation. To those who had not scripture it communicated all that was necessary to be known, and to us who, from a remote period, look back for information, it testifies what those doctrines were, which were revealed to the initiated, and were necessary of all to be believed. When we find this document containing not a syllable inapplicable to the

* Travels, vol. i. p. 72.

doctrine and sacraments of the Reformed Church*, and when we find it speaking of the Lord's ascension into heaven, his sitting at the right hand of the Father, from whence he *shall come to judge the quick and the dead*, with a distinctness which seems almost tantamount to a warning against the doctrine that he should ever again come to be offered on the altar, we may not perhaps feel justified in complaining that the Irish Gentleman sought his information elsewhere; but we may surely feel and express regret, that he did not compare the symbol which contained truth undisguised, with the writings in which he found strong evidences of concealment and evasion, and that, at least, he did not instruct us, why he preferred the testimony which his inquiries had taught him to disparage.

The reader of the Travels must have observed, that the principal evidences to the antiquity of transubstantiation have been sought and discovered in the works of men, who, as the Irish Gentleman informs us, wrote on that subject with studied ambiguity, and that no attempt has been made to remove the unfavourable impression produced against them. He will remember also, that the only human document which during the rigour of that inauspicious discipline, could be looked upon with respect, has not been at all regarded by the anxious Traveller, and appears to discountenance his opinions.

But, other evidences have been adduced, of an indirect and therefore perhaps a more unsuspecting nature. While the discipline of the secret prevailed, calumny was not silent, or imagination inactive, and the most malevolent reports were propagated and believed, respecting Christian practices, and banquets

* It is evident that the words "Communion of Saints" may have a spiritual interpretation.

of human flesh and blood. In these reports, the young Traveller hears the testimonies of ignorance and malice to the doctrine of the eucharist. He has discovered, also, that a certain heretic produced the appearance of blood flowing into the consecrated cup, and concludes that this imposture would never have been attempted unless a doctrine like that of the Church of Rome had disposed congregations to feel its influence. Arguments of this character are worthy of examination.

“Still enough, notwithstanding this system of reserve and secrecy had transpired respecting the Christian doctrine of the eucharist, to set the imagination and malevolence of unbelievers at work. Indistinct notions of dark, forbidden feasts, where it was said, flesh and blood were served up to the guests, became magnified by the fancies of the credulous, into the most monstrous fictions. Stories were told and believed of the dreadful rites practised by the Christians in their initiations, &c.” “it is not difficult, of course, to see through all this disfigurement of calumny, the true doctrine of which the profane had caught these perverting glimpses.”*

It would have been considerate in the Irish Gentleman, had he signified to his readers the works from which he had gathered his information respecting the calumnies against the early Christians, and the doctrine which gave occasion for them. In truth, the works of the Fathers are not like that field which persevering industry converted into wealth while seeking the treasure which it was thought to conceal. Much more gladly would one “drink and away” from many of these repertories of truth and fable; and when valuable information has been extracted from them, it is always matter of especial gratitude if a direction

* Travels, vol. i. p. 127.

also has been given to the very spot from which the precious deposit has been extracted. We seldom are called upon to thank the young traveller for such an accommodation; but, in his notice of the calumnies directed against the early Church, he leaves us altogether dependent on his own epitome for the evidence of his assertions.

One calumny noticed by the Traveller, it were especially to be desired, he had accompanied by the name of some ancient author. It was "of an infant covered with paste, being set before the new comer, on which he was required to inflict the first murderous stab, and then partake of its flesh and blood with the rest, as the common pledge of secrecy,"* a calumny not deserving of much attention for itself, but rendered very important by the commentary appended to it, namely, that it was a misrepresentation of the eucharist.

The only writer of the primitive times in whose works I have found a counterpart for this story of the child, is Minucius Felix. In his *Octavius*, he appears to have collected and spoken, in the person of an adversary, all the calumnies which had been circulated against the Christians; that they worshipped the head of an ass, that in their secret meetings, offences unutterable were committed, and that they became pledged to mutual secrecy by participating in murder. I do not know where the comment of the Traveller is to be found. I certainly have never been able to discover it in any ancient author. Minucius Felix is so far from countenancing such an explanation of the slander, that he does not appear to have ever heard or known of the doctrine which might suggest it. Speaking of the oblations which Christians presented, he concludes a series of

* Travels, vol. i. p. 128.

antithetical sentences with the expression "he who rescues a man from danger slays the *best victim*." These are our sacrifices. His mode of accounting for the calumny is, that the Dæmons strove by such evil reports to preoccupy the Gentiles against a religion in which they could be saved. To the same purpose Irenæus writes* that an evil being sowed heresies in the Church, that all might be defamed by the iniquities of false teachers, who could bring a reproach on those whom they were unable to lead astray. Justin Martyr† points out in his apology the necessity of distinguishing between the orthodox and the perverted. As, under the common name of philosophy, many and discordant sects may be enumerated, so, he writes, in the outward profession of Christianity, are to be named many with whose foul practices or principles the faithful should not be calumniated. The heretics he does not defend from the charges which are advanced against the whole Christian people.‡ Many other writers might be named who defended their faith against false accusations, but not one, at least so far as I have been able to see, who adopted a defence like that which the young Traveller has provided.§ Surely it would

* Iren lib. 1, 24.

† Apol.

‡ Justin, in express terms, writes, that he knows not whether the accusations, respecting cannibal feasts are not justly brought against heretics. Apol.

§ I am confirmed in my opinion that the comment of the young Traveller is new, by not finding any justification for it in the Annals of Baronius as epitomised by Spondanus. It is evident, neither the annalist nor the editor would have suffered such a testimony to escape. In a note, Ann. 120, p. 193, vol. i. it is said that the eucharist misunderstood might have co-operated with the impieties of heretics to excite prejudice against Christians. What the editor in his own person gives in a note, he would gladly have inserted in the text.

have been a most natural one had it been available. But "the secret"—it did not affect Justin Martyr. His apology contains an account of the doctrine and discipline of the eucharist. Had he conceived scandal to be occasioned by false representations of its nature, he showed that he was free to correct them.

Once indeed the eucharist is named in connexion with these calumnies, but not in such a manner as to strengthen the argument for transubstantiation. Œcumenius has preserved a fragment of Irenæus, in which he says that the slaves of Christians, Catechumens, who had heard their masters speak of the divine communion as the body and blood of Christ, "thinking that it was truly ($\tau\omega\ \delta\upsilon\tau\iota$) body and blood," signified so much to Grecians who had apprehended them. This would hardly be accounted serviceable to the argument of the Irish Gentleman, inasmuch as it testifies indirectly against transubstantiation, and shows how the eucharistic presence could be figurative and yet so misinterpreted as to furnish a pretext for defamation.*

* Baronius relates a dreadful story of a sect of heretics who were said to have wounded in very many parts of the body a male infant of one year old, and to have used the blood in the eucharistic bread. If the child lived he became their high priest; if he died of his wounds, they recounted him a martyr. Jerome, Epiphanius, Philastrius, Augustine, and others, are reported to have preserved this story, which however, according to Baronius, does not appear to be clearly proved.—Bar. Cent. 173-9. One thing will approve itself to every unprejudiced inquirer, that, from whatever source the calumnies against the Christians were derived, especially those relative to the cannibal orgies, the foundation or pretext for them is traced to the heretics. Indeed it would seem as if the orthodox became the victim of their own contrivances. They appear to have been credulous in receiving, and most industrious in circulating every species of defamation against those who differed from them in faith; they were ready to ascribe to

I am seriously inclined to believe, that, in the jugglery of the heretic Marcus, a foundation for the offensive reports against the Christians can be found, no less than in distorted representations of their own discipline and doctrine. However, it serves a different purpose in "the Travels." "He contrived by some mechanical process to produce the appearance of blood flowing into the chalice after the words of consecration." "Were any additional proof wanting of the prevalence in those times of a belief of the transubstantiation of the wine into blood, this effort of the Marcionite heretic to outbid, if I may so say, the orthodox altar in its marvels, would abundantly furnish it." The Traveller's account of this imposture is confirmed by an extract from the *Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire des Egaremens de l'esprit humain*,* &c. &c. "Il (Marc) avoit deux vases, un plus grand et un plus petit; il mettoit le vin destiné, à la célébration du sacrifice de la Messe dans le petit vase, et faisoit une prière; un instant après la liqueur bouillonna dans le grand vase, et l'on y voyoit du sang au lieu du vin."

There is a spirit of noble daring in the argument constructed on this incident, but it is not as discreet as it is enterprising. The pretended miracle of Marcus was "an effort to outbid the orthodox."† It may have been, if the orthodox believed that there

heretics the most enormous errors, and to tax them with the foulest practices. Eventually they suffered under a common reproach with those of whom, whether justly or not, they had spread an evil report.

Could heretics, so early, have begun to elaborate the doctrine of transubstantiation, and were the orthodox influenced and justified, by secret and indistinct rumours respecting such a rite, in imagining those stories which are now so ingeniously perverted.

* Travels, vol. i. p. 149.

† Ibid. p. 150.

was no transubstantiation. If they believed in that doctrine, the attempt of the impostor was far from "outdoing" them. They performed the two-fold miracle of changing the wine, and separating accidents from their substance, or, if it may be so said, bringing blood into the chalice, and rendering it invisible. The imposture which counterfeited by far the less wonderful part of this great marvel, could not properly be said to surpass it; and, inasmuch as it certainly surpassed the appearance of a figurative eucharist, we ought perhaps to argue, from the success he obtained, that what the heretic had to outdo or outbid, was not the complicated mystery of Transubstantiation.

But it is directly asserted, that this was the change the heretic designed to counterfeit. It was effected in the Mass, "*le vin destiné à la célébration du sacrifice de la Messe.*" It was done "in rivalry of the Catholic Eucharist." It was an absurd counterfeit of "that blood of which the heretics at the same time *denied* the reality." That is to say, the delusion of Marcus presupposes "the Mass" and all its accompaniments. This must be determined by the historical account of the circumstances, in which his imposture was successfully attempted. Where, then, is this historical account contained. The "*Travels,*" in direct terms, convey one part, that it was in imitation of the orthodox; the *Mémoires* vouch for the other, which relates to the sacrifice of the mass!

It is really wonderful to witness the activity with which evidences suitable to their purpose are sought out by those who have the honour of the Church of Rome 'at heart, and how rapidly they fly from Father to Father, and from all the Fathers to some adventurous modern, if his reasonings or his allegations are more accommodating to their purposes. "Curse me Protestantism" is the command under

which they seem to act; and if, standing on the eminences of early Christian literature, a spirit of blessing is within them, there is a Balak at hand to say, "Come, I pray thee, to another place, where thou shalt see" (them); "thou shalt see but the utmost part of them, and shalt not see them all—curse me them from thence." Was a deceiving spirit of this kind companion to the Irish Gentleman in his Tour, which, causing him to forsake the summits whence the primitive Church was had in prospect, taught him that the points of view from which least could be seen, would be most conducive to his purposes, and would least appal him with the vision of Protestantism?

The original account of the impostures of the heretic Marcus is contained in the writings of Irenæus; and it is remarkable, that the circumstances which rendered the juggle worthy of being converted into an argument in favour of transubstantiation, are not noticed in the early Fathers' report—nor, indeed, so far as I have been able to discover, by any early author. Even Baronius, at least in the enormous abridgement of his annals, by Spondamus (the only form in which I have had opportunity to consult him), is silent altogether as to those particulars from which the Irish gentleman argues an agreement between the Roman and the primitive doctrine of the eucharist. That, among the impostures of Marcus, one was a change in the appearance of the eucharistic chalice, or its contents, may be acknowledged; but that he had not any design to imitate the orthodox, or display in a visible form, what they offered under the species of wine, is not only not authenticated, but is met by the fullest and most decisive contradiction which, in the circumstances of the case, could be offered or expected.

Marcus, as Irenæus represents, "was a true pre-

cursor of anti-christ;" for, combining the juggling practices of Anaxilaus with "the impiety of those who are called Magi, he is reputed, among such as have not understanding, to perform mighty works.* Feigning to bless the cups mingled with wine, and prolonging the prayer of invocation, he causes them to appear red or purple, that it may be thought that *the grace from those over all*, drops *her* blood in the cup, and that they who are present may become very desirous to partake of the liquor, in order that on them also, the grace invoked by the magician, may overflow. Again, giving to women mingled cups, he commands them to bless in his presence; and, when this is done, presenting another cup much larger than that which the deluded female has blessed, and emptying from the smaller, blessed by the woman, into that which he has prepared, speaking at the same time, thus, 'May she who was before all, the incomprehensible and ineffable grace, fill your inner man, and accomplish in you knowledge of her, sowing the grain of mustard seed in a good soil;' speaking thus, and stimulating into madness the unhappy creature, he appears a wonder-worker, the large cup becoming filled from the smaller, so as to overflow. By practices of this nature he has deceived many, and drawn them after him; and it is understood that he has an attendant or familiar (*πάρεδρον*) dæmon, through which he seems to prophecy, and imparts the gift to as many females as he accounts worthy participators in his grace."

Such is the narrative of Irenæus, as to the imposture of Marcus noticed in "the Travels" and his

* Iren. lib. i. c. 8. We have not the Greek of the above expression. In the Latin version it is "perficere virtutes;" *virtus* being used elsewhere by the translator as synonymous with the Greek, *δύναμις*.

success in gaining proselytes. I could perhaps make the passage and my comments clearer, by entering more at large into the subject, but an exposure of all the doctrines taught, and the delusions practised by this profligate blasphemer, would be an evil attended by no compensating advantage. I confine myself, therefore, to a few remarks on the extract presented to the reader. Marcus is said to have combined the arts of the juggler Anaxilaus, with the impiety of the Magi. Anaxilaus appears to have been remarkable for feats of legerdemain, especially for changing the colour of liquids contained in glass cups. Artifices of this kind were not employed by Marcus for the purpose of illustrating any Christian doctrine. It was with magic the jugglery was united. It is in the next place to be observed, that the blood brought down into the chalice was not produced as the blood of Christ, but of an imaginary being from whom the Valentinians (among whom Marcus held a distinguished place) professed to believe the *Æons* had proceeded. In the third place it is to be remembered, that the miracles, (the jugglery rather) had such an effect on many, as to authenticate the wild doctrine to which it ministered, and to draw them from the faith—and finally, that, upon an occasion, when, were the doctrine of the Church of Rome, the doctrine of the primitive Church, some reflection on the outraged tenet might have reasonably been looked for, not a single expression or term is employed, by which such an agreement could, however faintly, be indicated.

Let the reader then bear in remembrance, that “the celebration of the sacrifice of the Mass,” is the exclusive property of the French collector, that the discovery of the heretic’s design, to outdo or “outbid” the eucharist, is altogether an original invention, or else rests upon anonymous and most probably in-

sufficient evidence, and that, accordingly, the case, when stated most favourably for the Church of Rome, divested of all the attendant circumstances which make against her, is this—the heretic Marcus changed the colour of a liquid contained in the eucharistic cup, and, by the pretended miracle, seduced numbers from the faith. If we are called on to decide, by such imposture and its result, what the faith was, the question will find its answer in the reply to another inquiry;—who would be likely to think the deceit the greater marvel, those whose discipline of a figurative presence was confessedly surpassed, or the believers in transubstantiation.

It has been advanced, as a boast, at least as a merit on the part of the Church of Rome, that she extended the principle of becoming all things, to all men, so far as to admit Paganism into her discipline, for the purpose of attracting heathens.* Is it

* “So far from denying their adoption of some Pagan customs, the early Christians would have avowed and justified such a policy, &c.” “The numerous vestiges, indeed, of old Paganism which partly from policy, partly from the force of habit and imitation, were still retained in the Ritual, language and ceremonies of the early Church would take far more space than my present limits can afford to enumerate them.” *Travels, &c.* vol. i. p. 183, 184. “The Catholics themselves are amongst the first to avow it, well knowing, however the Protestants may wish to blink such a conclusion, that these occasional resemblances to the forms of Paganism, in the ceremonies of their Church, form one of the countless proofs she can give of the high antiquity of her descent.” *Ibid.* p. 187. If the religion of the Church of Rome be acknowledged as heathenism with a few Christian appendages, the justice of these proofs is fully admitted, but if it be insisted that the substance of the religion is Christianity, that the embellishments alone are Pagan, the proofs come with a bad grace from the professed followers of him who warned his disciples against the folly of putting new wine into old bottles.

likely that she would not indulge in equal latitude, when the object was to rescue her own children from foul and execrable heresy, or to guard them against the wiles of accomplished and most flagitious deceivers. The tendency of the delusion, which Marcus found so successful, was, to create, in the minds of those who witnessed his performances, admiration of his power, and to indispose them for feeling interest in the sober and spiritual worship of the orthodox. The obvious mode of destroying his influence which would present itself to accommodating Christians, not having the knowledge by which his artifices could be exposed, would be, to abate the reverence which his wonders had attracted to him, by magnifying what was done in their own assemblies. If they believed only in a figurative eucharist, they would endeavour to show how the type became exalted and (it would not be too much to anticipate) sacred, by its correspondence with the holy thing which it represented. If they believed in a spiritual presence, they would strive not to exalt (for that would be impossible) the majesty of their belief, but they would exercise all their ability in so exhibiting the doctrine, that it should be vividly apprehended. To this object piety as well as genius would be dedicated, and in the effort to explain spiritual gifts, the language of metaphor would, as was natural, be largely and fearlessly employed. The early Christian writers and orators were not protected by the restraints of a nicely discriminating taste or a severe judgment; and, in the exertions which the impiety of the impostor provoked, it would not be wonderful if the sorceries he practised

It was no easy matter to dislodge heathenism, when a habitation was given. If for a moment removed, it would say, "I will return to my house, &c."

on the *cup*, they, in some instances, undesignedly wrought upon the *doctrine* of the eucharist, by the extravagances of a copious and fervid, but what might perhaps be styled a barbarous and empirical eloquence.

Thus, it may be, the source of transubstantiation has been discovered. It is certainly remarkable, that, subsequently to the practices of Marcus, during the period too, when the discipline of the secret was in force, those testimonies, on which the young Traveller relies, appear to have been furnished most abundantly. That they do not justify his conclusions it is scarcely necessary to affirm, but that they betray the excitement and eagerness which were naturally to be looked for, should not be denied or doubted. They cannot deceive any who take the trouble to investigate their meaning, but they are, in various instances, calculated to dazzle and delude the unwary. There are still many whom the juggle of the cup can deceive; there are also many to whom exaggerated epithets and wild figures of speech may serve to disguise pure doctrine.* Increase of know-

* Among the most distinguished proficient in the eloquence by which Marcus was outbid, Chrysostom has always held a high place. The following passage, from his work on the Priesthood, has been (with singular naivete, or with that reliance on the understanding of his readers, which succeeds best when it is most daring) adduced by the Rev Alban Butler, in support of the doctrine of the mass: "When you *behold* the Lord lying himself the victim on the altar, and offered up, and the priest attending and praying over the sacrifice, *purpled* with his precious blood," &c. &c. This seems to rival the purpled cups of Marcus; but, supposing that the orator had not the fear of transubstantiation before his eyes, and an apprehension that his words might be perverted (as they have been) to countenance heresy, it is not at all wonderful that he should have used the strongest terms, which, as in the instance quoted by Mr

ledge and exercise of the reflecting power, will, it is hoped, in time, apply their correctives, and, it is, meanwhile, a matter for which we should be deeply thankful, that, by observance of the unsuspicious rule which St Augustine laid down, even the most ignorant may be guarded against the evils of figurative language. This is one of the cases in which a name is so valuable. The judgment of Augustine coincides with that of most thinking men, but the authority is all his own. A precept of our blessed Lord himself, he would receive only as a figure, because it directed, what, literally understood, would be wickedness, namely, to eat his flesh and to drink his blood. Let such as cannot examine for themselves, the cloud of false witnesses which gather to the carcase of transubstantiation, try their testimony by a rule to which none can object, who would establish Roman doctrine by the authority of the Fathers.

CHAPTER VII.

Testimonies—Councils—Creeds—Liturgies—Canon of the Mass now observed in Ireland.

WHEN Protestants describe the first four centuries* of the Church, as containing records, in which the

Butler, are so obviously figurative, that to account them otherwise would be to say that Chrysostom had outdone the Marcionite in his impostures. When eloquence failed, it is probable that grosser miracles were constructed, and that they made way for transubstantiation.

* Rather it should be said, five centuries, in which the four councils of Nice, A.D. 335. Constantinople, A.D. 381. Ephesus, A.D. 431. Chalcedon, A.D. 451. Of the

faith was most purely preserved, they allude to documents of simpler character and of higher authority than the testimonies of individual writers. The authorities, to which they refer, are the four councils, in which the great doctrines of the three creeds were defined; and to these, they may have directed inquirers, not because of submission acknowledged to the Synods as of right, but, because, in their decrees, they affirmed the doctrine of Scripture. That the early Church, even so late as the sixth century, concurred in the respect, which Protestants have expressed, for the decisions in the first four councils, the following circumstance will testify.

The exaggerated terms of approbation, in which Gregory the Great signified his judgment of the truths declared in these Synods, is very generally known. Conceiving their decisions to be purely Scriptural, he wrote in one of his epistles as if his respect for them was such as he felt for the gospels. This was, no doubt, disproportionate praise, but it was less offensive as given to what he believed to be Scriptural truth. He was desirous, however, that what is now received by Roman Catholics, as the second general council of Constantinople, should be united in honour with its predecessors, and found it difficult to prevail. On one occasion, he had addressed an epistle to Theodelinda, Queen of the Lombards, which was to have been conveyed to the throne by Constantius, bishop of Milan. The epistle contained a reference to the *fifth* council, and the bishop declined the charge of it. Gregory, when informed of this unwillingness to abet his attempt, very modestly submitted to necessity, and returned the epistle with the obnoxious passage expunged.

acts of these councils, we may regard as the result, the Nicene and Athanasian creed.

He wishes the bishop to understand that the council of Constantinople, which, he says, many call the fifth, contains nothing contrary to the preceding four, but, at the same time, commends his discretion in not forwarding a document which might occasion scandal. "As to your statement, that you would not transmit my epistle to Theodelinda, because the fifth council was named in it, you acted correctly in not sending it. Wherefore, as you desire, we now name only four." Ep. ad. Const. Epis. Med.

Did these councils or any of them pronounce a decree of faith respecting the eucharist? No. How was their silence to be accounted for? The rule of the secret could not restrain the council of Nice when it was summoned by Constantine, to deliberate on matters affecting the welfare of souls. Was there no necessity for such a definition. We have already examined passages which strongly called for animadversion if the Roman doctrines were true, and in "The Travels," we are reminded, that* "a branch of the Gnostic Christians, nearly as old as Christianity itself, could not acknowledge the bodily presence in the eucharist;" nay, further, that "could one of these Gnostic Christians now reappear upon earth he would find nothing in the unreal and figurative presence, maintained by Church of England divines, that could, in the slightest degree, offend his most anti-corporeal notions, or prevent him from being conscientiously a partaker of the sacrament." If the doctrine of transubstantiation be true, there was pestilent error taught concerning it, in the first ages of the Church. Why did the error pass uncensured by the recognised authorities.

But there were creeds as well as councils—approved also by those general assemblies. Have they sup-

* Travels, vol. i. p. 227.

plied the deficiency which appears in the acts of council, and warned the faithful against insidious heresy. On the contrary, their silence is of a character from which it might rationally be inferred that the orthodox held no such doctrine as of a real corporeal presence. It may be said, so full are these creeds, and so carefully have the articles proposed in them been compiled, that they contain a summary of the history of Redemption. Why are they silent concerning the most stupendous marvel that was ever announced to man. They pronounce that our Lord was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary; that he was made man; that he suffered and was buried; that he arose from the dead; that he ascended into heaven; that he *sitteth* on the right hand of the Father; *that he shall come* to judge the quick and the dead; *and that, at his coming, all men shall rise again with their bodies*, and shall give account for their works. What ingenuity can insinuate transubstantiation into this symbol? Our Lord *sitteth* at the right hand of the *Father*. He *shall* come—but how—to be hidden under elements or species of bread and wine? No; “he cometh to judge the world.” What is to take place at his coming; he shall be offered as a victim on the altar? No; but all men shall rise with their bodies, and shall give an account of their works. What shall be said in explanation. That it was not necessary to insert the article of transubstantiation; that the doctrine was too generally known? The first article in the creed, surely, need not have been recited, if what was generally known might be, whatever its importance, omitted. Beside, the acknowledged fact, that the doctrine of the eucharist was misrepresented, rendered it necessary strictly to define its nature. Let this matter be examined, as partially as it may, provided it be seriously examined,

and the conclusion will force itself irresistibly on the mind, that, if the doctrine of transubstantiation be true, there are not in existence documents which, with greater effect and with more dangerous authority, inculcate heretical doctrine, than those which have been set forth to teach and guard truth; the Apostles, the Nicene and the Athanasian creeds.

“In addition to the decisive testimony, &c. there is yet another body of evidence still more ancient and precious to be found in those liturgies of early Churches, &c.; “and whatever interpolations they may have, some of them, suffered in their progress, it is not doubted, among the learned, that, in those parts where they are found all to agree, they may be depended on as authentic monuments of the apostolic times.”* The inquiring Irish gentleman has not, of course, neglected to consult this body of evidence which he very deservedly ranks in authority above the private testimonies of the most eminent and un-inspired individuals. His selection of passages to serve his purpose is judicious. The extracts are the most favourable he could have chosen, and, as they are not very numerous, I esteem it more advisable to transcribe them, than to incur the imputation of not exhibiting them in all their strength.

“Liturgy of Jerusalem (called also the Liturgy of St James). ‘Have mercy on us, O God the Father Almighty, and send thy Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, equal in dominion to thee and to thy Son; who descended in the likeness of a dove on our Lord Jesus Christ—who descended on the Holy Apostles in the likeness of tongues of fire—that *coming he may make this bread the life-giving body*, the saving body, the heavenly body, the body giving health to souls and bodies, the body of our Lord, God

* Travels, vol. i. p. 173.

and Saviour, Jesus, for the remission of sins and eternal life to those who receive it. Amen. Wherefore we offer to thee, O Lord, *this tremendous and unbloody sacrifice*, for thy holy places which thou hast enlightened by the manifestation of Christ thy Son,' &c. &c.

"Liturgy of Alexandria (called also the Liturgy of St Mark). 'Send down upon us, and upon this bread and this chalice, thy Holy Spirit, that he may sanctify and consecrate them, as God Almighty, and *make the bread indeed the body, and the chalice the blood of the new testament of the very Lord God and Saviour, and our Sovereign King, Jesus Christ,*' &c. &c.

"Roman Liturgy (called also the Liturgy of St Peter). 'We beseech thee, O God, to cause that this oblation may be, in all things, blessed, admitted, ratified, reasonable, and acceptable, that it may become for us the body and blood of thy beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.'*

"Liturgy of Constantinople. 'Bless, O Lord, the holy bread, *make indeed this bread the precious body*

* Travels, vol. i. p. 176. A passage follows the above which I do not well understand how to class, whether as if taken from the old liturgy or supplied by the author of "The Travels." It is, "At the communion, bowing down in sentiments of profound *adoration*, and humbly addressing himself to Jesus Christ, then present in his hand, he says, thrice, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof, but say only the word, and my soul shall be healed." I have not been able to discover any authority for the passage. In the Canon of the Mass, it is said that the priest shall beat his breast, and repeat the words, "Lord, I am not worthy," &c. ; but, as to addressing himself to Jesus Christ, "then present in his hand," unless he condescend to name his author, I apprehend we must be contented to regard it as the rubric of the Traveller.

of thy Christ. Bless, O Lord, the holy chalice, and what is in this chalice, the precious blood of thy Christ, *changing by the Holy Spirit.*”

Such are the fragments which “the Traveller,” with a degree of skill, denoting rather the subtlety of a practised controversialist than the intuition of early genius, and, with an economy to whose counsels young authors seldom listen, has taken from the passages in which their meaning is fully shown, and presented as testimonies favourable to transubstantiation. I will not delay the reader by an inquiry into the character of the documents from which the extracts have been made, nor detain him by giving proofs of what, were our Traveller of more mature acquaintance with his subject, might be termed disingenuousness. He who would understand the instruction to be derived from liturgies (and it well deserves to be understood) ought not to be satisfied with the brief notice they could obtain here, and can have his laudable curiosity encouraged and rewarded, by an unprejudiced study of a recent and most valuable work, “On the antiquities of the English Ritual and Primitive Liturgies.”* To that elaborate and

* *Origines Liturgicæ*, by the Rev William Palmer—a work intended and calculated to have permanence—evidently composed by one in whom the love of antiquity is second only to his love of truth, and in whom the union of uncompromising attachment to his principles, with the temperance which befits a witness of Christian doctrine, recalls to the mind (what modern times would cause almost to be forgotten) the distinction between moderation and indifference. The *Origines Liturgicæ* have no place for those compendious processes which serve well for a temporary purpose, and are often valued because they promise relief from the labour of thinking. Mr Palmer has examined all parts of his subject, the minute, as well as the greater and more prominent, with a degree of attention which the superficial cannot understand, but for which all who are capa-

able production I willingly refer, and, for myself, undertake the humbler office of simply reminding my reader, that, receiving the extracts from ancient liturgies exactly as the Traveller has presented them before us, with those typographical distinctions by which he would direct notice to what he esteems most important for the purpose he has in view, *nothing appears* by which the doctrine of the Church of Rome is countenanced, and very clear indications are afforded, that, even by these chosen passages of chosen liturgies, her peculiar tenets are discredited.

The doctrine of transubstantiation teaches that the substance of the elements departs, and the substance of the Lord's body is produced in place of it; and that, with the body, by concomitance, the blood, and the soul, and the divinity of the Saviour are, of necessity, connected. If the liturgies of ancient times were compiled by those, and for those, who believed in a doctrine like this, should we not expect to find conformity between the belief and the prayers of consecration? What the priest and the people expected was, that the substance of the elements should depart, and that, into their place, the substance of the body of our Lord, *the second person in the blessed Trinity*, should descend. Is there any thing like this in the extracts by which the Irish Gentleman would prove his position? No. There is a prayer that the Holy Spirit, *the third person in the Trinity*, would come down, and, by resting on the elements, make the bread the body of Christ, and the wine his blood—a prayer conformable to a belief which has been entertained by some divines of Protestant commu-

ble of comprehending how much the conclusion of a long and varied course of reasoning may depend on the accuracy with which seemingly small matters are ascertained, will feel deep gratitude.

nions, in a spiritual presence, but altogether at variance with the doctrine which, under pain of anathema, the Church of Rome commands to be accepted. I would propose to any member of that Church, to ask himself, or to inquire of those who are competent to instruct him, what was the wisdom of framing prayers so directly opposed to the object for which they were designed, or, at least, so widely estranged from it? Will any reflecting man seriously affirm, that it is by such petitions, spoken in the literal sense of the terms, he implores that the bread and wine shall depart (on which, *verbally*, he prays that the spirit of blessing may descend), and the substance (which has not been named in the petition) of the Lord's body shall assume the place of the departed elements? If the "literal sense" can permit such licentiousness of interpretation, all reasoning is at an end; language has undergone a change, by which it ceases to be an instrument of thought, and the question of doctrine would not even be simplified by an admission that the words of our Lord, "This is my body," were literal. Yet the champion of the Church of Rome has no resource—if he deny what would be tantamount to affirming that "figurative" and "literal" are the same—but to assert, that the early liturgies are too figurative to be adduced, or to confess that they bear testimony against transubstantiation.

An extensive survey of ancient liturgies will exhibit very abundant proofs, that none who held the doctrine of modern Rome assisted in their compilation. But perhaps for the present purpose it will be sufficient to adduce a single testimony, inasmuch as it shall be borne by the "Canon of the Mass," as in use *at the present day, and in our own country*. The prayer of consecration, the only one in which the conversion of the elements is implored, is as follows—"Vouchsafe, we beseech thee, O God, to make

this offering in all things blessed, approved, ratified, reasonable, and acceptable: that it may be made for us the body and blood* of thy most beloved Son, Jesus Christ." The words of commemoration are next recited, as in the liturgy of Milan, inserting the words "the mystery of faith," but abstaining from the expressions with which the Milan commemoration terminates.† The following prayer is next offered—"Wherefore, O Lord, we thy servants, as also thy holy people, being mindful both of the blessed passion of the same Christ thy Son our Lord, and of his resurrection, and also of his glorious ascension into heaven, offer unto thy most excellent Majesty, of thy gifts bestowed upon us, a pure host, an immaculate host, the holy bread of eternal life, and the chalice of everlasting salvation. *Upon which vouchsafe to look with propitious and serene countenance, and to accept them, as thou wert pleased graciously to accept the gifts of thy just servant, Abel, and the sacrifice of our patriarch, Abraham,*

* The reader is not to be surprised at such expressions, or to imagine that they countenance the notion of such a change as transubstantiation implies. It should be remembered that many of the ancient Fathers explained the terms, alleging that signs were called by the names of the things they signified. The Council of Carthage, declaring what things should be offered, and confining them to bread and wine, says that only the "body and blood of the Lord should be used—that is, bread and wine mingled with water." Conc. Carth. Can. 40. Zonaras, p. 426.

† They are these—"Hæc quotiescunque feceritis, mortem meam prædicabetis. Resurrectionem meam annuntiabitis. Adventum meum sperabitis, donec iterum de cælis veniam ad vos." As often as you do these things, you shall proclaim my death, you shall announce my resurrection, you shall *hope for my coming, until again I shall come to you from heaven.* The canon now in use substitutes, "As often as ye do these things, ye shall do them in remembrance of me."

and that which thy high priest Melchisedek offered to thee, a holy sacrifice, and an immaculate host." Thus, *after the consecration and change*, God is implored to look with propitious and serene countenance on the offering, and to accept it graciously, as he had accepted the offerings of irrational or lifeless things, from man's hand. Can the idea of blasphemy proceed to a more daring excess than this, that a sinful man shall imagine himself an intercessor for our Lord Jesus Christ, imploring that God will vouchsafe to look upon *Him* with a benign countenance, and accept *Him* graciously, as he accepted the firstlings of Abel's flock. It is not possible. Regarding the elements as signs of Christ's body and blood, the expressions are intelligible; otherwise, adapted to the Trent decree, they serve only to denote the fatal consequences of a doctrine which contemplates the "conversion of the Godhead into flesh, not the taking of the manhood into God."

One word more upon this subject, and I have done. What I am about to write may serve to show how nature will assert her privileges and provide admitted substitutes in the place of an incredible dogma. I have, at this moment, lying before me, two books of prayer in use among my Roman Catholic countrymen. One is called the Poor Man's Manual, and the other, the Key of Paradise. One is published with the recommendatory notice. "*Permissu Superiorum*," both appear to have found much favour, and both contain instructions and "*short prayers at mass, necessary for the better understanding*." These devotional assistances are recommended in the "*Key of Paradise*," by the following preface: "The sacrifice of the mass celebrated in memory of the passion of our Lord, Jesus Christ, as he commanded his apostles, when giving them his body and blood, he said, *do this in remembrance of*

me, that is, do this in memory of my passion, as if he would have said, remember that I suffered for your salvation; let therefore this mystery be brought in use by you, for the good of you and yours." The prayers and instructions follow, and compel us to discern in the mass, a representation of the death and passion of our Lord, every incident in the type being designed to suggest the remembrance of some circumstance in the awful events it figured. Thus, "when the priest begins the mass; Jesus enters the garden," and a prayer suitable to the remembrance is provided. Through all the ceremonies there is the same system of explanation continued, nor does the interpreter discontinue his office when the solemnities are of the most awful significance. "At the unveiling of the chalice, Jesus is despoiled of his garments. At the covering of the chalice, Jesus is crowned with thorns." When the priest washeth his fingers, Pilate washeth his hands. When the priest holds his hands over the chalice, Veronica offers Jesus a towel. When the priest signs the oblation, Jesus is nailed to the cross. At the elevation of the host the cross is raised up." The prayers, in all these cases, are suggested by the incident in the passion, not by the representation on the altar; that, at the raising up of the host, which furnishes a fair specimen of all, being—"Lord Jesus Christ, who wouldst be raised on the cross, and in that manner be exalted from the earth for my sake, raise me, I beseech thee, from all earthly affections, that my soul may always live in heaven." In one of these books of prayer, the instructions are accompanied by engravings, in each of which, as in Raphael's Transfiguration, a two-fold action is represented. The chapel, with its lights and altar, officiating priest and his juvenile acolytes, occupies the lower space, a screen of clouds separates this from the upper part of the engraving, where

the incident represented below, is, not very gracefully, but, with the aid of the title, intelligibly, delineated. It is carefully contrived, that, wherever circumstances admit, the eyes of the priest shall have an upward direction, as if he were guiding the people where their thoughts should be lifted. In some instances, indeed, this is unnecessary, as, for example, where the enormous size of the scourge and lash and the fury of the executioners, or where, with weighty hammers and cruel blows, the hands of Jesus are in the act of being nailed to the tree, suggest with much more painful vehemence than the tranquil representation below, the remembrance which ought to be cherished. But the fact is, that, even in lifting the host and the chalice, so far from observing the directions which the Traveller bountifully added (at least without naming the giver) to the liturgy of Rome, the pictured priest has his eye piercing the clouds, and seems as if he listened for the sounds of the cruel blows that were impiously inflicted above. What does all this mean? If the mass be a representation of the passion of Christ, it seems reasonable to direct the thoughts and heart to the great things commemorated. If the Lord Jesus, in the body, come down to present himself on the altar, it is indignity to him to have the minds of the congregation set on any thing but the miracle of divine condescension then wrought for their benefit. I conclude, therefore, that, whatever be the doctrine which Rome holds, she acts as if she regarded the mass, as, in some sort, a dramatic representation of Christ's suffering for our sins; and as if to serve the purpose of such a representation were its principal end and object.

CHAPTER VIII.

Scripture—Cyril of Jerusalem—Sixth Chapter of St John
—1 Epistle to Corinthians, c. 11.

AMONG the divines, by whose writings the Irish Gentleman hoped to be guided on his way, none appears to have afforded him more satisfaction than Cyril of Jerusalem. And yet, it may be said with truth, Cyril left behind him one counsel, which the traveller disregarded, of far greater excellence than any to which he gave attention. “Respecting the divine and holy sacraments of faith,” he says, “nothing, not even the most minute, should be delivered without the authority of the Divine Scriptures, nor should they be traced out by simple probability or by ornamented language. Nor should you yield your faith to me proposing these things to you, unless you receive from the Divine Scriptures, demonstration of what I say; for the safety and preservation of our faith is not eloquence of speech but approval of the Holy Scriptures.”* It would be easy to pardon, even had he erred in his instructions as widely as the Traveller represents, and far more widely than he has really strayed, one who could so fully and honestly set up the standard by which his mistakes can be corrected.

The Irish Gentleman was so little influenced by the advice, or even by the example, of Cyril, whose writings frequently are nothing more than scriptural passages connected together, that in the seven hundred pages of his work, it is probable, ten are not

* Cat. Myst.

dedicated to the Holy Scriptures. It ought to have approved itself to his mind, that, if he desired to learn the religion which God had taught, he should have sought it in the book which He had commanded to be written for our learning.

“The awful announcement then made (in the discourse of our Lord, St John vi.) of the miraculous feast about to be instituted, followed up, as it was, on the solemn night of the institution, by those simple and irrefragable words, ‘This is my body,’ form the grounds of that implicit Catholic belief which the Church “has, at all times, maintained.”* Here is the candour of an ingenuous young man. He rests his dependance upon Scripture. Whatever men may have said, if they spake not according to that good book, they were nothing.

“He transferred them to another banquet—a banquet most tremendous, saying, ‘Take eat, this is my body. How was it that they were not struck with terror when they heard this? Because he had previously discoursed with them at large on the subject.’† This passage is quoted from Chrysostom to prove that, at an early age, the sixth chapter of St John’s gospel was regarded as containing, in our blessed Saviour’s discourse, a preparation for the sacrament which he afterwards instituted. I should not be disposed to contest the matter, even if the authority of Chrysostom, or any other eminent individual, had not been brought forward to influence its decision. The command of our Lord to eat his flesh and drink his blood must have appeared awful to any hearers of slow imagination and meanly instructed. It must have still more affrighted the apostles, whose religious sentiments taught them to regard with abhorrence the tasting of blood, to account in-

* Travels, vol. i. p. 225.

† Ibid.

deed a breach of the commandment by which it was prohibited, an offence deserving of death.

The sentiments of the apostles, or rather the discipline from which they imbibed them, should be somewhat more fully considered. They were straitly prohibited from tasting blood—they were taught that the penalty of violating the precept was death—and they were instructed also in the reason why such a command was given. In every particular, the command of the Lord Jesus was directly opposed to that in the fear of which they had been brought up. The law forbade them to taste flesh with the life thereof which is the blood.* The Lord commanded them to eat flesh and to drink blood. The law declared, the soul that tasteth blood *shall die*.† The Lord Jesus commanded them to eat and drink *that they might live*; declaring that except they eat of his flesh and drink of his blood they must die. The law declared that the reason why they should not dare to taste blood—why they must perish if they transgressed, was because it was given to make atonement for the remission of their sins.‡ The Lord assigned, *as the precise reason, why they must eat and drink, that which the law gave for their abstaining*, “for it is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins.” Thus, it is impossible to imagine a more decided opposition than prevailed between the instructions of the law, wherein they had been brought up, and the precept of their master; and this was exhibited to men who attached equal importance to the ceremonial precept respecting blood as they did to moral enactments, and by him who declared, that he came not to destroy the law but to fulfil. It seems to me, therefore, very natural, to imagine that, had

* Gen. ix. 4.

† Lev. xvii. 10. *passim*.

‡ Lev. xvii. 11.

the apostles been unprepared for the institution of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they would have testified their amazement; and I look upon the discourse in the sixth chapter of St John's gospel, as having disposed them to receive their master's words without horror or opposition.

There were three modes by either of which the minds of the Apostles could be prepared to afford a quiet submission to a precept which seemed adverse to their law—by becoming convinced that, in its literal sense, the new commandment did not repeal the old, or that it was enacted by competent authority, or else that it was to be figuratively or spiritually understood. That the command to drink the blood of Christ, literally interpreted, was opposed to the Jewish law, cannot admit a question—doubly opposed—to the positive precept, and to the reason for which such a precept was given. That they did not hold the law relating to blood abolished is clear also. It is proved that the distinction of clean and unclean remained in Peter's mind, from the vision in which the Lord reproved him; and it is clear, that the apostles who continued, in their assembly at Jerusalem, the prohibition against tasting blood, could not have supposed it abolished. Let us see, then, whether an unprejudiced man would be inclined to think the third explanation reasonable, and to interpret our Lord's discourse in a figurative or spiritual, rather than in a literal acceptance.

Two passages in this most important discourse should be placed in juxta-position. They are those which contemplate belief, and the eating the flesh of the Lord, and drinking his blood.

ST. JOHN VI.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every

ST. JOHN VI.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath

one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

Here it is distinctly said, that life and the resurrection are bestowed upon every one who believes in our Lord Jesus Christ.

eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

53 Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Here it is said, that those who eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, and none other, shall have life and the resurrection.

Unless we go the length of saying, that, in one part of his discourse, our Lord would revoke a promise which he had most distinctly given in another, we must admit that, in the above passages of Scripture, there is not opposition. A brief survey of the discourse, and the circumstances in which it was spoken, will render their perfect correspondence in spirit and expression more plainly evident.

A multitude, who had followed our blessed Saviour into his retirement, were miraculously fed, in a place where, without miracle, food could not be procured. Availing himself of the opportunity to recommend good counsel, as his custom was, he magnified the blessedness of partaking of that heavenly food which contains the gift of immortality, and declared that he was, himself, the bread of life which came down from heaven. From the thirty-second to the fortieth verse, inclusive, this truth is taught, that Christ was the bread which came from heaven—and bestowed immortal life, and that belief in him was the means through which the benefit and blessing were imparted. Thus far, the expression eat or drink is not found. To believe in him—to come unto him—are

the expressions with which the promise of life is connected. So far, the hearers of our Lord appear to have understood that he spoke in a figure, for their amazement was not at his calling himself bread, but at his declaring that he had come down from heaven. "The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then, that he saith, I came down from heaven?"* It was not the purpose of our blessed Lord to indulge the worldly spirit in which doubts of this nature were proposed. He re-asserted his former expression, enforcing the necessity, and setting forth the advantage, of believing in him, and, as his discourse advanced, employed more forcible expressions, until what he had generally named as bread at the commencement of his address, he declared, more explicitly, to be his flesh. "The bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."†

A new subject of astonishment was now before the multitude. When Jesus declared himself to be bread, they appeared capable of understanding how such an expression could be received, and were perplexed only in the endeavour to reconcile his descent from heaven with the humility of his condition. But when, instead of gratifying their curiosity, the Lord re-asserted, in still more forcible terms, what he had already declared, and taught that the bread which he should offer was his flesh, which he would give for the life of the world, the perplexity of his hearers increased, a new cause of amazement superadding horror, and it may be disgust, to the difficulty by which they had previously been embarrassed. The

* St John c. vi. v. 41, 42.

† Ibid. v. 51.

difficulty and the horror prevailed, and "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him."

At that time, there were standing near our Lord, some to whom he had given the privilege, that, while others were addressed in parables, they should be taught to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God.* An occasion now offered itself, on which they were justified in hoping that this their high privilege would not be denied them. They had, on a former occasion, directly solicited the Lord to explain what they could not understand; but, having received his promise, they could now await, with dutiful patience, its fulfilment. Nor was it long delayed. "It is the spirit that quickeneth—the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life." Thus he spoke, after having previously expressed himself in a manner which increased the difficulty of understanding his original declaration. "Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before." Having by this question suggested to their minds the natural impossibility of fulfilling literally that part of his discourse which had occasioned alarm, he declares that the flesh profiteth nothing, that the spirit quickeneth, and that the words he spoke were spirit and were life—thus, it is reasonable to conclude, giving to all the preceding portion of his address, a figurative and spiritual interpretation.

There are some controversialists in the service of the Church of Rome, so resolute, that they dispute this conclusion, and, by the simple expedient of insisting that our Lord's explanation must be figuratively understood, transfer to the parable which was to be explained, the more direct authority of the "letter." Thus, they say, "flesh profiteth nothing"†

* St Luke, viii—x.

† St John, vi. 63.

means no more than that it is worthless, if separated from spirit—that it was not, as the Jews may have imagined, to be eaten in a fleshly form, or (in the words of various polemics) “as flesh from the shambles,”—but that the benefit of true participation of Christ’s substantial flesh is taught in the former part of the discourse, and is not rescinded here. Let it be borne in mind, that no one of the limitations and conditions by which this reconciliation is said to be effected, is found in the words of Christ, or deducible from them. He does not say, that it is only under certain circumstances his flesh is profitless. Having previously said, that they must eat *his* flesh—he teaches them, that literally to comply with the precept would be impossible, because he shall in the body be withdrawn—and unnecessary, because “the flesh profiteth nothing;” words which could not, with propriety, be spoken, if, under any circumstances, literally to eat of his flesh and drink of his blood could be profitable.

Let any who hesitate still, reflect for a moment what they would say, if a passage equally clear were to be adduced, in which the advantages of believing were denied. Imagine a passage like the following to be found in scripture—“Does it offend you that eternal life was promised to those who believe in Christ? What and if ye shall see Christ himself put to an ignominious death—belief profiteth nothing. It is the body of the Lord given in the eucharist by which souls are saved.” Would he be accounted of sane mind who should attempt to vindicate the efficacy of faith, or to reconcile the expressions, “He that believeth in me shall live—belief profiteth nothing”—by any such contrivances as have been adopted by Romish controversialists? No disputants would more triumphantly expose the disingenuousness of such a procedure than those who strive now

to procure respect for it. But there is no expression by which the promise given to faith is invalidated. On the contrary, one sentence, the concluding one of this part of the address, "But there are some of you that believe not,"* constrains us to feel that the importance of faith, as the means whereby life is imparted, is never lost sight of through our blessed Saviour's discourse.

It is not to be denied that such expressions as to eat the flesh of our Lord have been, by some writers, accounted too forcible to represent merely a participation by faith; and that adversaries of the Church of England, have spoken with much boldness, when challenging her ministers to show why terms which are, literally, so different in signification, shall be employed to denote the same idea. To understand the propriety of employing language so very forcible, it should be recollected that the doctrine which the apostles were to preach, was one the least likely to originate in the human mind, (because it is indeed the most opposed to the besetting evil of man's nature), and when fully made known and understood, the most likely to be effectual; the doctrine of justification by faith. The occasion, on which our Lord spoke, furnishes proofs that it was a doctrine which, to be guarded from abuse, must be very strongly enunciated. A multitude had followed, "not because they saw the miracles, but because they did eat of the loaves and were filled." Among them were many who would "take him by force and make him a king," exposing themselves to all the hazards of acting as well as speaking against Cæsar. These people, surely, would profess belief in him. They would encounter for his sake, extremity of peril, and they would raise him to the throne of Israel. Had

* St John, vi. 64.

eternal life been promised simply to belief, all, of the character of these men, would have said to their souls "take your rest," the lifting up of the cross might be a summons to arouse, instead of subduing, all the evil passions by which Christ would be dishonoured, and those who yielded assent to the truth of the gospel history, who did not dispute the divinity of Christ, or doubt of his atonement, would say they believed, although they had, in no respect, imbibed the spirit of his example, or been crucified to the world in his death. It was necessary to designate the momentous truth which Jesus revealed by some more solemn character than that of a word which, having been applied to profane and trivial uses in life, was liable to the peril of misinterpretation. The belief, to which a promise was given, was not to be the mere reliance of soldiers on their chief, but to be an humbling and purifying trust in a Saviour.

Self deception is not so practicable when a man proposes to himself the question—can I be said to eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood—as when he demands—do I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Jews listened with patience to our Lord's assurances respecting belief in him. They doubted only when he spoke of descending from heaven, but, in all probability, received with much complacency the promises annexed to faith. When he represented belief, however, under that very striking figure, in which, members of the Church of Rome should recollect, Augustine discerned a precept "to communicate in the passion of the Lord, and with delight and profit to lay up in our memories, that his flesh was wounded and crucified for our sakes," and in which even those not prepared for such instruction, might have discerned the recommendation of a principle which should influence the heart by love,

they murmured among themselves saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat. According to the characters of men, different reasons may be assigned why they cannot understand religious truth conveyed in figurative language. In some, the difficulty may arise from slowness of the imagination; in some it may proceed from the torpor of their spiritual affections. The apostles were disturbed because of the former of these reasons; the general multitude for both. Where spiritual faculties have been unexercised, all communications of knowledge are referred to a principle which arrogantly rejects what it is incapable of comprehending; but, where feelings belonging to a better nature have been, however faintly, experienced, they dispose the mind to believe that truth may be contained in expressions which, because of the defects of intellect or education, are not thoroughly understood, but which their author, in his own good time, will satisfactorily elucidate. The character of the individuals, whom our Lord addressed, may be seen in the manner in which they received his declarations. Some departed and walked no more with him when they heard what their carnal nature could not understand. Some remained, and, when the explanation was vouchsafed, which their own faculties could not supply, were prepared by the consciousness within them to acknowledge that their master's precept was holy and true. Such is the inference we should, of ourselves, have drawn; but the Scriptures have not left a truth of such moment to inference. They teach us what was the acceptance in which the apostles received the Lord's instructions. They teach us, also, how differently they understood the declaration that "the flesh profiteth nothing," from that vague sense by which, in modern times, its force has been evaded; when they declared, that they remained with Christ, not assigning as the

reason for their decision, that he was to give them his flesh or the substance of his flesh, but, because, he possessed what he had previously taught them to value, “the *words* of everlasting life.”

The expressions, to eat and drink, have been accounted too gross to represent or figure spiritual operations ; but not by those who have felt what it is to have all the faculties of the soul fixed upon the thought of Christ and his passion. Even for such as have not this testimony, the Scriptures have provided, as there had previously been provided, because of other wants, for the apostles, assurance to the contrary. “I have meat to eat that ye know not of, said the Lord.” My meat is to do the will of my Father which is in heaven.* When our Saviour spoke these words, his apostles at first imagined, that they denoted bodily sustenance, but when the second expression explained the sense in which the former should be received, they understood how spiritual things might be designated by words which, literally, denoted what was bodily, and they were thus prepared to understand the figure which Christ afterwards explained to them.

Therefore, when, “in the same night that he was betrayed,” the Lord instituted the holy sacrament, no murmurs or questions arose respecting the new commandment. Peter, who, when Christ spoke of his death, rebuked him, saying, be it far from thee Lord, who withstood the voice from heaven, directing him to slay and eat—was now silent, although ordered to infringe one of the most solemn enactments of the law. James was silent, who gave his council at the assembly in Jerusalem that the people should abstain from blood. Thomas, who declared that he would not believe in the resurrection of Christ

* St John, iv. 32—34.

from the dead, unless he saw the print of the wounds in his hands and feet, and whom the Lord Jesus condescended to satisfy, for his and our certainty, by the proof he demanded; (although the Church of Rome would have us imagine that the disciple who would not believe in Christ's risen body, unless his senses were thus convinced, believed nevertheless that he had the power to produce at his own word that very body and enclose it in a wafer,) Thomas—the incredulous Thomas—was silent; and disciples who looked upon the tasting of blood as the meriting death, all drank of the cup which Jesus offered to them. If they believed that the precept was figurative, that it denoted a spiritual participation, all is natural and consistent. If they thought the words literal, their obedience and the manner of it surpasses comprehension.

It would be very easy to show, by abundant proofs from Scripture, that the apostles had not, and could not have had any notion at all analogous to that which the Church of Rome holds respecting the presence of Christ in his sacrament. Of this the reader can satisfy himself by considering the expectations the disciples were taught to entertain of their blessed Master's second coming in the body, which they were always encouraged to believe should be visible and glorious, his humiliation having ended with the death upon the cross. "This same Jesus shall so come again in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." "As the lightning that lighteneth from the one part under heaven," &c. "If they say he is in the secret chambers" (the wafer is a very secret chamber) "go not forth," &c. and numberless expressions to the same effect teach us how the disciples looked for the coming of their divine master. I shall not dwell upon them, nor enlarge an enumeration of passages with which

every reader is supposed to be acquainted, and which he will find aptly corresponding with the doctrine of the three Creeds. I shall perhaps be more profitably occupied in offering a few remarks on a portion of St Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, from which other defenders of the Church of Rome, as well as the Irish Gentleman, have imagined that their cause could gain succour.

In the remonstrance which the Apostle addressed to the Corinthian Churches, on the irreverence with which some of their members attended at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the following expression is found—"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh condemnation to himself, *not discerning the Lord's body.*"* On these concluding words an argument is reared up, to which for the reasons which always make small things of consequence, importance is attached. How, it is asked, could men discern a body which was not there? We might content ourselves with asking, in reply—does the Church of Rome maintain that the body, which she says, is in the sacrament, can be discerned? Should she say, as has been said, it can be discerned by the eye of faith—she is speaking altogether a figurative language, and, by her own example, authorizing us to understand figuratively the terms on which her argument has been founded. But the passage supplies us with a better answer and a fuller explanation. The Apostle answers the question which the controversialist proposes, and in a manner which renders further reply unnecessary. Let the reader compare the words which have been supposed to justify or countenance the Romish doctrine with the verses immediately preceding—from

* 1 Cor. xi. 29.

the twenty-fifth, inclusive, in the same chapter—and say whether further explanation is required. The twenty-fifth is, “For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do *show the Lord’s death till he come.*” This is followed by “Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.”* The guilt of insult to the body and blood of the Lord is made known in the preceding verse, as the word, which connects the two verses, renders evident. The offence against the Lord’s body and blood is unworthily communicating in the sacrament which “*shows the Lord’s death.*” When the nature of the offence is further indicated in the twenty-ninth verse, under the terms “not discerning the Lord’s body,” can any doubt remain on the mind, that these words also are to be referred to the verse in which the object of the sacrament is explained. The sacrament shows the Lord’s death, being a symbol of his body. The unworthy communicant thinks not (it is to be remembered that the Roman Church does not, more than Protestant communions, account “discerning” to denote vision of the senses), as his irreverence testifies, of that body or death which he professes to commemorate, and he is, accordingly, guilty of profanation.

And now that I have endeavoured to answer the question which advocates of the Church of Rome propose, may I be permitted to ask a question in return. The Apostle says, “As often,” &c. “ye do show the Lord’s death *till he come.*” What is

* 1 Cor. v. 27. It is said that the authorized version errs in using “and.” The argument is not affected by a decision in favour of “or.” Clemens Alex. quotes the passage as in our version, “and.” Lib. Strom. 2.

the meaning of these three words? Will an ingenuous and reflecting adversary dispute the proof they afford, that while sacraments continue to show forth his death, Christ in the body *has not come*.

A second question. The Corinthians are accused of irreverence in their mode of celebrating the Holy Communion. "For in eating every one taketh before other, his own supper, and one is hungry and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the Church of God, and shame them that have not?" Can any reflecting man believe that such irreverence accompanied *adoration of the host*? I have heard a question; how it could have come to pass, that the Corinthian converts behaved with irreverence towards the Lord's body? Various answers may be given; but if it be demanded whether any good was secured by such indecorum, we may answer, Yes—it leaves upon record an irrefragable testimony against that foulest doctrine, which, in the absence, we may say, of the light of Scripture, an enemy sowed in the Lord's vineyard.*

* Johnson's Unbloody Sacrifice is often quoted in the Travels, and his authority is called in, as if it favoured the doctrine of the Church of Rome. To do Mr Johnson justice, it is but fair to say, that he argued most strenuously against transubstantiation; and in justice to the Church of which he was a member, it must be said, that he should never be adduced to bear witness to her doctrine. One circumstance will be sufficient to show how little he could be relied on, and how far the passion of theory carried him from truth. He translates 1 Tim. vi. 12, "Thou hast made the good *oblation*." Where could an author fail to discover arguments in his favour who could find in "*ὁμολογια*" an oblation."

CHAPTER IX.

Transubstantiation compared with our Lord's Incarnation—
the Trinity—Church of Rome cruel.

IT is not my intention to enter upon any exposition or defence of the great and mysterious doctrine of the Trinity, but it may not be inexpedient to show how little justification is afforded for the efforts which have often been made to confound it with the doctrine of the corporeal presence. Our Traveller assigns various reasons why both must share the same fate, having the common protection of the same champions, and equally exposed to danger of rejection. The witnesses for the Trinity, testify also, he says, with equal clearness, in favour of transubstantiation; the influence of "the Secret" spreads like mystery over each, and whatever objections the reason of educated men can advance against the truth of one, will be found, with precisely the same force, to take effect upon the other.

In all these particulars there is great and almost unaccountable error. Although Protestants are disposed to set little value upon any testimony which is not in accordance with Scripture, yet have they carefully collected confessions of early Christian authors, that they believed, in the great doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and thus have left but little excuse to those who argue as if such evidences do not exist. To do our Traveller justice, however, he does not deny that they have been offered; he merely insists, that the same witnesses

have testified in favour of transubstantiation. The reader will judge whether the latter part of this assertion is correct; and when he has seen, as I trust he has, that the witnesses of early days are vindicated from the charge of testifying to a doctrine of which they had no knowledge, he will allow their evidence to retain whatever authority it possessed, when delivered on a truth which revelation had made known to them.

The discipline of the secret by which, it is said, the witnesses of the Catholic or Trinitarian doctrine were influenced, has furnished another opportunity to connect that great fundamental article of a Christian's creed with the Roman Catholic dogma respecting the eucharist. The reader will judge with what justice, when he remembers that it had not indisposed the world for testifying faith in the words of those three great formularies which, until the Council of Trent added to them, might have been regarded as declaring the belief of the entire Church; nor had it allowed the minds of men to be pre-occupied against the decrees of the first four councils, in which the articles of the creeds were promulgated with authority. The agreement thus early manifested in the Christian world, renders the argument from "the secret" quite inapplicable. Independently of the proof afforded, where only it could be conclusive, in the Scripture; the testimonies of the early Fathers, of liturgies, of creeds, of councils, are adduced to prove the faith of primitive times in the doctrine of the Trinity, and may be adduced to prove also, that the faith of these times did not comprise belief in transubstantiation. Why then should doctrines so differently attested be represented as dependent for their proof on similar assurances.

But, however industrious our Traveller appears in

his endeavours to impeach the evidence of Christian doctrine, by showing that falsehood also has had its support, he seems to have been incited to his principal effort, by a more pernicious council than would advise only the disparagement of human testimony. Supposing him to have succeeded in setting aside all the witnesses who spoke since the canon of Scripture was arranged, he would have done the cause of Christian truth but little wrong; but, if he made it evident that any one doctrine revealed in Scripture is contradictory to human reason, he would have done religion an injury of such a nature as to be irreparable. It is a dreadful spirit which possesses the Church of Rome. If you do not receive her dogmas, her mode of persuasion is a curse, and her arguments unholy sophistry to shake your faith in God and his promises. Rather than see you receive the Gospel from other hands than hers, she would have it go to you discredited; and, in a spirit alien from the example of Jesus, and untaught by his pathetic rebuke, her counsel to her teachers is, that they call the consuming fire from heaven, and, one might almost add, summon up the worst passions of earth and hell, to be avenged of any who will not receive them with that lowest prostration of the spirit when it renounces reason.

In this evil disposition, she has constantly endeavoured to place truth in peril by connecting it in the minds of her votaries with doctrines against which, whenever their reason awakens, they feel disposed to remonstrate. Thus has she acted in her endeavours to defame the doctrine of the Trinity, and in the effort to prove that the incarnation of our Lord is no less contrary to reason than that dogma which she seems to guard as the spell on which her power and existence are dependant. Our Traveller appears

rather too ready ; as the following passage will show, to countenance her in this method of desperate defence :

“ CONNEXION BETWEEN THE EUCHARIST AND THE MYSTERY OF THE INCARNATION.

“ The difficulties, says the Rev Mr. Rutter, which Protestants allege against transubstantiation, are not greater than those which the Socinians may and do urge against the incarnation, as will appear from the following parallel :

Protestants reject transubstantiation.

1. Because the senses judge the host to be mere bread.

2. Because one body will be in two or more places.

3. Because the same body will move and not move, be visible and not visible, mortal and immortal, passible and impassible.

4. Because Christ would be in the form of a wafer.

5. Because Christ's body would be in a form opposite to human nature.

6. Because Christ's body would be eaten by sinners.

7. How can Christ's body be confined in the tabernacle, and be also in heaven.

8. Because it appears absurd to adore Christ in the Sacrament.”

The Socinians may equally reject the incarnation.

1. Because the senses judge Christ to be a mere man.

2. Because one person will be in two natures.

3. Because the same person will be both God and man, visible and not visible, mortal and immortal, passible and impassible.

4. Because an immense God would be in the form of a simple man.

5. Because God would be in a form opposite to the divine nature.

6. Because God would be crucified by sinners.

7. How can Christ be confined in the womb of a virgin, and be also in heaven.

8. Because it appears absurd to adore him who was born of a woman and afterwards crucified by man.”

I trust I may be pardoned for considering one or two of these articles somewhat more formally than their inherent merit seems to deserve; especially if my remarks are found applicable to more important difficulties than those by which they are occasioned.

The first objection both Protestant and Socinian (I adopt for the present, Mr Rutter's distinction) although in form one, in reality consists of two propositions, thus :

1. Because the senses judge the host to be bread.

This is the argument of Protestants.

1. Because the senses judge Christ to be a man.

To this Protestants may assent.

but, the second part of the proposition :

The senses judge the Host to be *nothing but bread*.

Christ to be *nothing but man*.

rests rather on Mr Rutter's authority, than on the support it is likely to obtain from either Protestant or Socinian. Protestants do not affirm from the testimony of the senses that the host is *mere* bread, or *nothing but bread*. They do not account the evidence of the senses worthy of respect in a case where they are not competent to judge. In fact, they will not admit, that whatsoever does not manifest itself to the senses, is thereby proved to have no existence, and therefore, in their argument from sense, they confine themselves to the assertion, that the *bread* is proved to have a *real existence*, against the decree of Trent, which asserts that the substance of bread has passed away. If there be Socinians who extend the argument further, and assume that the senses contradict the existence of that which they cannot discern, they may be indulged, without envy, in the credit of

a very original but not very plausible sophism. Protestants, however, who account such reasoning foolishness, should not be charged with having employed it.

In the second Socinian objection, it can scarcely be imagined, that any who recognise two natures in the person of a man can be found to concur, whilst all will admit the absurdity of supposing body to fill, in the same instant of time, two places distinct and remote from each other.

The 3d, 4th, 5th and 6th objections may be removed by the application of a principle which recognises the distinction between body and spirit. Experience and reason testify to us, that the one is limited by conditions which, in no degree, circumscribe the other. Spirit we know in thought; body in its passive qualities; reasonings respecting each, must, of course, differ as the nature to which the reasoning is applied. It is conceivable, that spirit may assume to itself forms varying to a degree of which body is not capable. God may set body free from the laws and conditions of its being, but then it would cease to be body. If it were asserted, that the spirit of the Lord Jesus had so united itself to matter as to make a wafer its body, the assertion would amaze all thinking men; but it is easy to judge, how greatly the difficulty of believing is increased, when it is affirmed, that what was a wafer a moment since has vanished, and that what now occupies its very contracted space, is the body which suffered on the cross. The popular reply of Roman Catholics is, all things are possible with God. Yes, —He can do all things; but when he causes the same body to be in the same instant of time, in Dublin and Madrid, he has freed it from the laws which

affect material natures and rendered its being and presence spiritual.

The sixth objection, which the Socinian is supposed to urge, arises from the seeming unsuitableness of the sacrifice of the cross. Whatever consideration such an objection may merit (and it has been amply considered and abundantly refuted), nothing but that promptness to find resemblance in dissimilitude, to which differences do not appear, could account for its being confounded with an objection of a totally different nature. Protestants have faith in the death upon the cross which they regard as the appointed and suitable termination of the life of humiliation in which Christ came to save the world, and they believe, that, now, when all is finished, death hath no more dominion over the Lord of life, nor is indignity again to be offered him. As to the Socinian objection, it is, in all probability, in accordance with an opinion which all would entertain, if the Scriptures had not taught, that thus it might be; but there are no reflecting men (with probably the exception of the Rev Mr Rutter and the Irish Gentleman) who would think it the same thing, to assert, that, *every day*, Christ *was eaten by sinners*, and that *he died for sin once*. In a word, to deny the humiliation of Christ, prolonged after his ascension into heaven, is very different from denying, that he once, for the sins of the whole world, submitted to the death upon the cross.

In the eighth objection, it is alleged, that it seems absurd to adore one born of a woman, and afterwards crucified,—as absurd as to adore Christ in the sacrament; that is, to adore what seems a wafer. Nothing can be more erroneous. There is no absurdity whatever in the thought of adoring a human being who has left a divine remembrance behind him.

On the contrary, the tendency of man so to worship is, perhaps, the best known characteristic of his nature. It is unnecessary and unsuitable to the occasion to enlarge on this topic, but it is right to add, that the objection of Protestants is not grounded on a notion that Christ is not to be adored in all places and in all acts of devotion, but that that which they hold to be bread and wine should not receive divine worship.

Thus, I trust, it has been shown, that the attempt to lessen the influence of truth, by associating it with superstition, has manifested rather the zeal than the discretion of those who could contemplate so unholy an alliance. It was my intention to proceed with some remarks on the injury done to the scheme of revelation, by annexing to it a dogma which, like transubstantiation, can only receive assent by the sacrifice of every thing which could give the evidence for itself and all other doctrine, authority; which requires, that the senses be accounted untrue, while their own testimony must be received as unimpeachable, in order to prove their falsehood; but I have found the subject so fully and ably discussed by a contemporary writer, that I feel I am consulting best for my reader by transcribing a few lines from his observations. “Should a miracle, *which is received only upon the evidence of sense*, be any sufficient inducement to receive a doctrine *which implies a rejection of the evidence of sense*? Is it reasonable to be called upon to believe one of our senses in one instance, *in order that we may disbelieve all our senses in another instance*. Can a proposition be considered credible, *when we must reject the only evidence upon which we admit the premises, before we come to the conclusion*? Upon what evidence am I called upon to believe in transubstantiation? Because a miracle

has been performed. But why do I believe the miracle? Because it is evident to my senses. So that I am to believe the miracle, *because* it is agreeable to the testimony of one of my senses, and also to believe transubstantiation while it contradicts the evidence of all my senses. The belief in the miracle proves that I trust my senses. The belief in transubstantiation proves that I distrust my senses. So that if I have *good ground* for believing the miracle, I have no ground for believing in transubstantiation, and if I have good ground for believing in transubstantiation, I have *no ground* for believing in the miracle. To believe in such a doctrine, upon the evidence of a miracle, would be neither more nor less than to lay the axe to the root of all rational belief whatever. It would be to make the *sufficiency* of the evidence of sense the grounds of its insufficiency.”*

Such is the dogma which is pronounced similar in character with the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and for the credibility of which it is attempted to extort favourable testimonies from writings of the wise and free. Nothing but extreme haste or inexperience can excuse such misrepresentations. All reflecting men confess, that, in the province of faith there are revelations *above*, but steadfastly maintain that there can be none *contrary*, to reason. Modes of existence of the spiritual and infinite surpass our comprehension; but doctrines respecting “body” (a substance which sense can discern) opposed to reason, are to be rejected, because they would discredit all evidence on which faith could rest.

In fine, it should be observed, that the evidences offered in proof of the dogma are worthy of it. On such testimony no man of sound mind could believe

* Observations on the vindication, &c.

any communication of importance; and no man, it may be added, could, on any testimony, receive the dogma on which it has been offered. "I never," said a man of true genius, "could believe *demonstration*, if it contradicted *intuition*."

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CHAPTER X.

Tradition—Council of Trent, Irenæus, Protestant Doctrine
—2 Thessalonians.

THE author of the Travels, his readers need scarcely be informed, appears to ascribe little authority to scripture in deciding questions of faith. The circumstances under which he commenced his search, and the object he had at heart, render this error the more remarkable. He had very gloomy suspicions as to the tenets of the Church of Rome and their demoralising tendency; his opinions of the reformed principles, known as only they could be to him in the characters of his Protestant acquaintances, may be judged from the secret desire by which he confesses himself influenced, that, in some form of Protestantism, he should discover the object of his search; yet, strange to say, he formed his decisions on the testimonies which members of the Church of Rome adduce as in their favour (but from which when unfavourable they dissent), and scarcely condescended to examine that testimony to which all sects of the reformed appeal, although not they alone, but their adversaries also, confess that it contains no error.

The disadvantage of this method will be rendered apparent by a single consideration. Suppose it ascertained that the doctrines of a Protestant Church (let us say the Church of England) could not appeal to the testimony of a single uninspired writer among the early Christians, but could exhibit irrefragable proof that her principles were clearly and with au-

thority proclaimed in the Bible, while the Church of Rome, without any warrant of scripture, was rich in human attestations, would the question at issue between the Churches, be decided favourably to the institutions which the book of God's word disallowed? An answer is unnecessary. No man who professes to believe in a revelation would for a moment hesitate to declare, that the highest degree of human testimony is altogether worthless, if set in manifest opposition to those records which are infallibly true.

How came it to pass that our Traveller adopted a course so widely diverging from that which reason would recommend, and, under the peculiar circumstances in which he chose it, so very uninviting. I looked, he says, for Protestantism, I could not find it. In Tertullian—not there. Basil—he knew nothing of it. I have twenty witnesses to prove that they were not cognisant of the doctrine held by Protestants, and I will not seek their principles in the Bible, on which all profess to believe their doctrines founded, nor study that Gospel, which amidst all diversities of opinion, it is the profession or the boast of every sect, faithfully to preach and interpret.

It would not be an easy matter to reconcile this disregard of Scripture with sincerity of purpose, if we had not been instructed, that the Irish Gentleman was, if not educated, brought up in the discipline of the Church of Rome, and, although there are cases in which the native vigour of the understanding manifests, in the sentiments and conduct of individuals not yet set free from thralldom, an independent spirit very impatient of fetters, there have also been men of ability and even genius, on whose minds submission has wrought a habit of obedience, such as will not suffer, even by a question, or a thought, the slightest disparagement to authority. It is most natural that Roman Catholics of little re-

flection shall not feel that deep and exclusive reverence for the Bible which causes Protestants, with unceasing attention, to lay up its instructions in their hearts. It is to Protestants the sole rule of faith, so that nothing shall be taught as necessary to salvation, save that which is contained in God's written word. It is to Roman Catholics a book of so little authority that they are contented to receive the report of what had been spoken nearly two thousand years since, and had never been written, as of no less authority.

It is not, perhaps, just to impute wilful neglect of Scripture to one who has been accustomed, from his earliest life, to see it connected with, what Protestants would esteem, a disparaging association, but it brings more deeply before us the necessity of inquiring into the truth of that doctrine, in which the insufficiency of the written word is asserted.

It was at the Council of Trent, that, for the first time, tradition was raised to the high honour of holding divided empire with the Holy Scripture. After long debate and much expressed difference of opinion, it was decided that the purity of Evangelical truth was contained in the Scriptures, "and in unwritten traditions, which, received from the lips of Christ by his apostles, or from the apostles themselves, the Holy Spirit speaking in them, have come down to us delivered, as it were, from hand to hand" — "quasi per manus traditæ." An anathema was annexed to this decree, pronounced against all who would not admit as canonical the Trent enumeration of the books of Scripture, or who should knowingly (*sciens et prudens*) condemn *the aforesaid traditions*, having previously declared that this species of testimony "shall be received and revered with equal affection of piety" as God's written word.*

* Conc. Trid. Sess. 4.

The art with which the Council of Trent has drawn up its decrees has never been sufficiently applauded. Even where they seem most distinct and peremptory, you can discern, after you have for a short time reflected upon them, that there is a meaning for the judgment different from that which first meets the eye, and, in various instances, you find, in language which seems to breathe all the spirit of the Roman Church, ample provision for Protestantism. In this decree, especially, respecting tradition, it is difficult to believe that the language in which it is expressed should not have been carefully studied, and intended, at the same time, to awe the superficial by the pretence of a two-fold rule of faith, and to provide assurance for the reflecting, that the authority of Scripture is undivided. The reader shall judge. The decree first pronounces the decision of the council, that the words of Christ and his apostles—the dictates of the Spirit which have been preserved in writing and by unwritten tradition are of equal authority—it proceeds next to recite the names of the books of Scripture which shall be accounted canonical, and pronounces an anathema against whosoever shall dispute the judgment of the council respecting them, or who shall (*sciens et prudens*) despise the *aforesaid* traditions—that is to say, who shall despise words *which he knows to have been spoken by Christ or his apostles*. Can it be supposed, that the omission on the part of the council to give assistance in determining what these traditions are, could have been accidental? Surely the mere circumstance of enumerating the books of Scripture would have suggested the necessity of similar carefulness respecting the “traditions.” It is expressly stated that the scriptural enumeration is made, “least any doubt should arise what are the books which are received by the council.” If tradi-

tions are to be had in equal honour, they must have been held worthy of a similar protection. What is then to be understood from their not having obtained it? Either that the divines, assembled at Trent, designed to render their anathema imperative, or that they were overruled by a power which defeated their purpose and marked their proceedings with inconsistency.

In truth, there is no Protestant who could not subscribe to all that part of the decree respecting tradition with which any, except its framers, are concerned. They may deny that evangelical truth is divided between Scripture and unwritten testimonies; they may affirm that whatever God requires of us to believe, he commanded to be written for our instruction; they may pronounce a strong censure on those who could leave dependent on precarious preservation, doctrines of faith which they should have committed to the sure custody of written records; and yet, if they are persuaded that there is a divine truth which is not contained in Scripture, but which, on satisfactory evidence, they are persuaded to believe Christ or his inspired disciples had spoken, they will not, because of the nature of the transmission, account the truth as of less importance and authority: that it had a divine author will satisfy them that it is to be received, even though they find it difficult to understand why it has not been more carefully guarded.

Where, then, are those traditions to be found, which dispute authority with Scripture? By what characters shall we recognise them? Where are the evidences of their preservation? What are they? The Church of Rome offers no assistance in answering. Until the 8th of April, 1546, whatever individuals may have thought, the Church of Rome in its collective capacity had pronounced no decree, which

exalted tradition to a co-partnership with Scripture. In the declaration which, upon that occasion, the Council of Trent issued, we are of course to look for the doctrine which is affirmed as matter of faith respecting the unwritten testimony. That doctrine is, that whosoever will not receive, with due respect, the words of Christ and his apostles, knowing them to be such, simply because the mode of their transmission has not been by written characters, incurs the penalties of excommunication. All, therefore, who say, that, if they can be assured of the divine origin of an expression, or a doctrine, or a rite, they will respect it, whatever the source may be from which their knowledge of it has been derived, must be considered unhurt by the Trent malediction. Nor can they be, on the principles of the Church of Rome, accursed, although, at the same time, they affirm that Scripture alone contains all things necessary to salvation; although they refuse to admit tradition into their rule of faith. The Church of Rome has not authenticated, by its testimony of approval, any one tradition distinct from Scripture. She has left it, therefore, to the private judgment of her children to ascertain what unwritten testimony should be received; and, if the judgment of a rational man cannot be satisfied that the evidence to prove tradition pure, through the lapse of eighteen centuries, is of equal authority with that which establishes the authenticity of Scripture, he has not *knowingly* condemned the traditions of the apostles, because he does not know, either from the Church of Rome or his own inquiries, that, in an unwritten form, any apostolic tradition exists. He is, in consequence, secure against ecclesiastical censure.

But it may be said, that the existence of unwritten traditions was affirmed by the Council of Trent. No doubt it was said that truth is contained in Scripture

and tradition ; but it was not affirmed that any truth was to be learned from the latter, in which the written word did not give instruction. It cannot, therefore, be ascribed to the Church of Rome as an article of faith, that, on the separate and independent testimony of unwritten tradition, any doctrine is to be received. The contrary, indeed, appears to be very fully established, as may be understood from the following statement. In its third session, the Council of Trent thought it proper to set forth a confession of faith, “following the example of the Fathers, who in former councils were wont, by such professions, to confound heretics, to attract infidels to the faith, and confirm the faithful.” The confession of faith thus made and ratified in the council was none other than the Nicene Creed, which is declared to be “that principle in which all who confess the faith of Christ necessarily agree, and the firm and *only* foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail.”* Here, then, we have the summary of doctrine fixed, and as, in this summary, there is no article which has not its proof in Scripture, we are led to conclude, that when, in the first decree of the succeeding session, tradition was named, authority was claimed for it rather as offering concurrent testimony to the truths which Scripture taught, than as furnishing separate and independent evidence, whereby additional doctrines were, or might be, authenticated.

If there be Roman Catholics who deny this interpretation of the Trent decree, it is for them to discover what those traditions are which all men are bound to honour, and to vindicate their Church and themselves from the charge of lessening the authority

* Conc. Trid. Sess. 3.

of Scripture, by a declaration that it is of but partial use, and disturbing men's minds by proposing a standard of faith consisting of two parts, one of which they fully and minutely profess to describe, and another which they do not describe, and to the discovery of which they do not offer even the slightest assistance. If tradition establish no doctrine which is not founded in scripture, the decree of the Council of Trent respecting it, was, it must be confessed, superfluous; but, if it be supposed to convey any truth which the Bible has not taught, it is worse than superfluous, it is criminal, in neglecting to discriminate between the real and the spurious, and to settle by an authoritative declaration, not alone the canonical books of scripture, but also, what shall be regarded as the canonical traditions.

When the only document, having authority, in which the Church of Rome seems to claim for unwritten tradition an undue respect, is thus clearly shown to have advanced no such pretension, it may be thought a very uncalled for labour to offer further argument in defence of the sovereignty of scripture. Public opinion, however, among Roman Catholics, has stripped it so of the supremacy which is its due, and has so long contemplated it as of merely Consular authority, that a few words more may not be quite out of season; especially as they are suggested by selections which the author of the *Travels* has made from early writers, and which, being the extracts chosen to be adduced *in favour* of giving honour to the unwritten word, may, without any great stretch of invention, be received as the passages in which, tradition being mentioned, there is least spoken *against* it.

The testimony of Irenæus is that upon which the Irish Gentleman chiefly relies, and to which he affirms "double weight" should be ascribed, "inas-

much as he not only asserts in all his writings, the high authority of tradition, but was himself one of the earliest and brightest links in that chain of oral delivery which has descended to the Church of Rome from the apostolic age.”* It can hardly be thought necessary to remark, that, in order to render the testimony of Irenæus available at the present day, it should contain something more than a bare recognition of traditions received by him and his contemporaries. We may, therefore, pass by his account of Polycarp’s preaching, of which, he says, having heard it in youth, he can never lose the remembrance. Indeed, perhaps it is not perfectly right (although it may be tedious, as it is true, to speak it,) not to observe, that the reasons assigned by Irenæus for remembering Polycarp’s discourses, discountenance the doctrine of tradition. He remembered, because all the associations by which the memory of early youth is most affected, lent their aid to give permanency to the first impressions. “I can tell the place in which the blessed Polycarp sat and taught, and his going out and coming in; and the manner of his life, and the form of his person;”† it was, therefore, not a marvel that he should remember discourses recalled often to the mind by such remembrances—revived, too, frequently, by the scriptures, to which he declares the discourses were conformable; and it will not create much debate to affirm, that those who received reports of Polycarp’s discourses from Irenæus would be more likely to retain a fresh remembrance of what the narrator, in his own person, addressed to them, than of the reports they received from him of his predecessor. In truth, the alteration which stories undergo, as they pass “from hand to hand,” renders it scarcely necessary to say, that an argument

* Travels, vol. i. p. 35.

† Ibid. p. 36.

‡ Ibid.

which should prove Irenæus, living in the second century, a competent witness to the words of one whom he had intimately known, might not be effectual to establish the perfect fidelity of every link in the chain of transmission, during the sixteen centuries which have elapsed since his removal.

It is not therefore alone on the fact that Irenæus remembered the countenance and voice of Polycarp, our Traveller relies for his persuasion that the authority of Tradition and Scripture are equal. He quotes from the saint a recommendation to Christians that they attend to the instructions of their pastors, an assurance that while "the tongues of nations vary, the virtue of tradition is one and the same every where," and, in fine, he recites as though it were decisive, the following remarkable passage, "Supposing the apostles had not left us the Scriptures, ought we not still to have followed the ordinance of tradition, which they consigned to those to whom they consigned the Churches? It is this ordinance of tradition which many nations of barbarians, believing in Christ, follow without the use of letters or ink."* And thus the Irish Gentleman concludes his search, satisfied that he has discovered the Romish doctrine of tradition. The argument is of a novel kind. If the apostles had not left us the Scriptures we ought to follow tradition. But they *have* left us the Scriptures, therefore we ought to follow tradition still. Again; there were barbarians in the second century, who not having the knowledge by which they could commit their religious doctrine to writing, adhered to the instruction communicated by a then recent tradition; therefore, the nations of the nineteenth century, rich in the knowledge and arts of a very refined age, are to pay

* Travels, vol. i. p. 37.

to a tradition eighteen hundred years old, the same respect which barbarians, unacquainted with letters, yielded to traditions which their fathers had told them, and of whose truth they had the most convincing testimony.

But what were those traditions in which the barbarians were instructed? Had the author of the *Travels* been equally communicative with the writer whose sentiments he thought he was reporting, he would not have left it necessary for any individual (not a member of the Church of Rome) to add a single remark to the very unequivocal testimony he had been the honoured instrument to produce in favour of Protestant doctrine. But, indeed, it is not now we are to learn, that all advocates of the traditionary creeds discontinue their testimonies just when they are about to become important, breaking off always in the moment most interesting, and leaving to others the disagreeable office of piecing out their imperfect attestations. How then does Irenæus continue the picture of which our Traveler has exhibited a very inadequate representation? After mentioning the belief of certain barbarians in the ancient tradition, he proceeds to describe the tradition and the belief—"believing in one God, the Maker of heaven and earth, and all things therein, by Jesus Christ the son of God, who, out of his most eminent love to the creature, vouchsafed to be born of a virgin, uniting man to God by himself, suffering under Pontius Pilate, rising again, and being illustriously received into glory, he shall come again the Saviour of those that are saved, the judge of those that are judged, sending into eternal fire, the misrepresenters of truth and the despisers of his Father and of his coming,"* &c. "Thus by that

* Iren. Adv. Haer.

old tradition of the Apostles they reject the counsel of Heretics." Is there any doctrine here which is not contained in Scripture? Surely no member of the Church of Rome will affirm that there is. What is the case, then?—Irenæus declares, that if the Apostles had not left us a written testimony we should content ourselves with the unwritten; as a certain class of barbarians who knew not letters, received, through tradition, the main articles of the Apostles' Creed, but no article which was not recommended by Scriptural testimony. Who could argue from this, that a people not unacquainted with the characters in which recorded evidence is preserved, and not left without the holy Scripture, must nevertheless profess their belief that there are testimonies unproved, unnamed, which they are to elevate into importance, not that, by their aid, the written evidence may be illustrated, but that, if I may be allowed so humbling an allusion, for want of their endorsement or acceptance, the Scriptures shall be dishonoured.

It may be a question with some, why Irenæus, who could have appealed to Scripture, should yet have made so honourable reference to other species of evidence. He did so, because the heretics against whom he contended, denied the authority of the Sacred Volume, pretending that God would vouchsafe another Gospel, and that, *in his private conferences with the disciples, our Lord had frequently communicated truths of more moment than those recorded in Scripture*. "When," Irenæus writes, "they are confuted by the written word, they assail the holy Scriptures themselves, as if they were not of authority, because they are variously expressed (*varie sunt dictæ*) and because truth cannot be discovered in them by those who are unacquainted with tradition, for, that they were delivered not in writing, but *vivâ voce*, as St. Paul, we speak wisdom among the perfect, and this wisdom they, each of them, say they

have discovered.”* This is the language, this the argument which Irenæus imputes to the Heretics of his day, and thus he was constrained to adopt that mode of proof by which, although it was not the best, he was enabled to expose their errors. He acted in the same spirit as that in which the advocates of Protestant truth now show the weakness of their adversaries’ cause, illustrating their reasonings by extracts from the works of the Fathers, not because they hold these works in too exalted honour, but simply, because they contain the testimonies to which the Church of Rome most earnestly appeals, and by which, accordingly, she, or at least some among her members may be most effectually brought to see the errors of the system they are upholding.

Our Traveller, although he does not seem to have made account of his knowledge, was not altogether unacquainted with the facts of the subject on which he was writing. He was aware† that the Valentinians were the heretics to whom, or against whom, the remonstrances he has quoted from Irenæus were applied. He was aware of the source in which the errors of the Valentinians originated, *and he knew it to be a dependance on unwritten tradition.* “Such was the fanciful account given by Valentinus,” “such the wild tissue of fiction which its inventor boasted to have derived *from the secret communications of Christ himself to his apostles.*”‡ It is somewhat strange, that, after having found the foulest heresy thus originating in tradition, the Irish gentleman had not corrected his very erroneous notions respecting the passages he quoted from Irenæus, and been protected against the mortification he may hereafter feel, should he come to the knowledge of the deception he has, innocently, attempted to practise on his readers.

* Iren. Adv. Hær. Lib. 3-2. † Travels, Vol. I. p. 35.

‡ Travels, Vol. I. p. 243.

I pass from the Travels and the Fathers, to notice one citation by which controversialists, in modern times, have endeavoured to extort from Scripture itself, a recommendation of the rival authority. St. Paul had written, in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word or by epistle;"* and it is confidently argued that the injunction which the apostle lays on the Thessalonians, that they *preserve* tradition, is tantamount to a precept by which he would enjoin all Christian people (eighteen hundred years later than the day in which he wrote,) to *receive the doctrine held respecting unwritten testimony* by the Church which proclaims herself its depository. Surely, if she has not preserved the very tradition of which the apostle so earnestly recommended a careful keeping, she ought to be more guarded in the doctrine she teaches, and more modest in setting forth her pretensions. Yet so it is, that while she confesses this most valued tradition to have been lost, and assigns no justification or excuse for her failure in duty, she pronounces, with as much confidence as if she had been faithful, that she has sovereign dominion over unwritten tradition; and, although she will not declare what it is, requires, of all her votaries, a promise to receive it. Yes; the Church which thus confesses her neglect in a matter of the deepest importunce, claims the benefit of a repaired infallibility, and demands to be believed again. She acknowledges that she has not been faithful to the apostolic injunction, and yet insists on being regarded, notwithstanding the lapse, as unimpeached and impeccable.

But is it true that the Church of Rome acknowledges the loss of those traditions, the object of the apostolic precept on which her claims are founded?

* 2 Thess. ii. 15.

The charge was urged against her by Chillingworth, very long since, long enough, surely, to justify our demand for a reply, and although she may be well pleased to think the argument of that great man forgotten, she cannot say, that by any exercise of reason or ingenuity on the part of her retainers, it has ever been answered or evaded. The case indeed is too strong to admit of ordinary defence or "explanation." In recommending that the traditions be preserved, St. Paul, it is undeniable, referred especially to those testimonies by which the "man of sin" could be discerned, and which, it was not, we can understand, safe to communicate in a written form. What the Church of Rome pronounces on the subject may be collected from certain notes in the Rheimish Testament, in which, strange to say, in the same page, the claim of undiminished confidence is found preceding the confession of most unpardonable insolvency.

"See here," writes the commentator, "the unwritten traditions commanded to be kept."

"Here must be meant some particular person."

"It may, *perhaps*, be understood of Mahomet."

"St. Augustine professeth plainly, that he understandeth not these words, nor that that followeth of the mystery of iniquity, and least of all that which the apostle addeth, 'only that he which holdeth now do hold, which may humble us all, and stay the confident rashness of these times, *namely of heretics.*'"

Well may we ask, what heretics? Who are the most confident and rash? Who are they who declare themselves the guardians of tradition—are proved by their own acknowledgment false to the solemn trust—and yet, demand and obtain most ungrounded confidence to the contradictory assurance, that now and ever they have been faithful? Where is the confident rashness to be complained of—in those who say the tradition most impressively recommended to the keeping of a primitive Christian Church has been

lost—who hold therefore the written characters in which the Bible is preserved to afford better evidence of doctrine, than the testimony of remembrances which only a continued miracle could preserve, and to which, their acknowledged unfaithfulness, at a very early age, gives proof, that no miraculous protection was extended;—or in the submissive votaries of the Church of Rome, who say, although the only tradition committed expressly, so far as we have knowledge, to the keeping of our Church, has been lost, we hold her, nevertheless, an infallible guardian of tradition; and although we know nothing of what it is, or what it teaches, we profess ourselves ready to pay it the same honour with which Protestants reverence their Bible.

The “confident rashness of heretics” which the Rheimish annotator censures, is of that kind which suggests a further remark on the loss of the apostolic tradition. The reader will understand that one particular in which the condemned precipitancy of heretics betrayed itself, was in the boldness which ascribed to the Bishop of Rome those characteristics by which the apostle Paul designated “the man of sin.” I do not enter here into an enumeration of the various minute and important coincidences between the history of the Papal chair, and the prophecy addressed to the Thessalonians; but I may observe, that no man has ever read the one and the other without thinking the correspondence between them worthy of deep attention, and that very many wise and good men have been persuaded to believe the historical narrative an exact fulfilment of the prophecy. The Church of Rome, of course, denies, and even launches a damnatory censure against any who gainsay her decision; but why has she suffered that tradition to be lost by which the dispute could be satisfactorily, and with the highest authority, decided. She declares that she has the custody of tradition—she

confesses that the tradition respecting the "man of sin" was the testimony by which he could infallibly be discovered, and when called on to produce the tradition committed to her care, for the purpose of determining by its testimony whether the pope is "the man of sin who opposeth himself against all that is called God and worshipped," her answer is—hear it all who would determine where confident rashness should be imputed—I cannot produce the tradition which described the blasphemer—it was lost probably in the fourth, certainly before the end of the fifth century.

I dwell no longer on the subject of tradition. Whoever desires full information as to the doctrine and the argument upon it, will be repaid for his perusal of a tract to which I have already referred my readers. For our present purpose, it is sufficient briefly to recapitulate the contents of this chapter. There is nothing in the writings of the early Fathers on tradition which favours the popular doctrine of the Church of Rome—there is nothing in creeds or councils by which it is affirmed—and there is no document in existence from which we can learn where approved tradition may be found. What is then this unwritten testimony for whose deferred appearance Scripture must wait, before its evidence can be admitted? Where does the tradition lurk? How has its preservation been cared for? Have popes and priests with their expiring prayers whispered it to their successors? Is it a real being which can disperse its bodily form upon the viewless winds, or lurk within the recesses of Braganza or the Vatican to awe refractory vassals with the menace of its forthcoming? How potent an auxiliary a name may be. Since the decree of Trent exalted this abstraction into so undue honour, it has not disclosed a single unwritten testimony to the world, yet does its imaginary existence lend authority to the order to which its

treasures are revealed, and invest with a sacred awe the pages of the Missal. Tradition is the Egeria of the Romish priesthood. If a more ambitious title be advanced in its favour, substituting the Breviary for the Bible, it may be regarded as the "White Lady" of the house of Rome; its presence revealed only in solitary places, its voice faint and uncertain, its form evanescent, its aspect in all the lineaments, faintly and capriciously discernible, with nothing distinctly visible but the chain of argument from which the phantom particles of its form gain a semblance that they cohere; a girdle which has been, age after age, wasting; and which, in the vision conjured up by the Irish Gentleman on his Travels, appears worn to a thread.

CHAPTER XI.

Unbroken Succession—Baronius, Spondanus, Bellarmine—Papal Chair—Right of Private Judgment—Gregory Naziazen, Jerome—Exclusive Salvation—Creed of Pope Pius—Council of Trent, Scriptures—Dr. Murray—Dr. Doyle.

"THE history, indeed, of this one (the papal) chair, presents in itself," observes the Irish Gentleman, "such a phenomenon and marvel, as no other form of human power, in any age of the world, has paralleled. Through a course of eighteen centuries, amidst the constant flux and reflux of the destinies of nations—whilst every other part of Europe has seen its institutions, time after time, broken up and reconstructed—while new races of kings have, like pageants, come and disappeared, and England herself has passed successively under the sway of five different nations, the apostolic see, the chair of St.

Peter, has alone defied the vicissitudes of time—has remained as a city seated on a mountain, a rallying point for the Church of God throughout all time, and counting an unbroken succession of pontiffs, from its first occupant, St. Peter, down to the present hour.”*

If nothing more were implied in the above passage than that the bishopric of Rome exceeded, in the wealth and temporal dignity ascribed to it, every other “episcopal chair,” it would not be necessary to offer any comment upon it, or to express an acknowledgment, that the revenues and the political influence of many popes were greater than those of “their fellows.” If wealth be the test of truth, the Church of Rome, with perfect justness, could condemn the doctrines of the reformation, and of the apostles, and fulminate anathemas against all who would contend with her for a spiritual possession to which she could advance an indisputable, although not a spiritual, title. It is quite evident, however, that it is not such a title our Traveller would assert for the Church to which he has returned. We are, accordingly, to consider, in the eloquent eulogy he has pronounced on the permanency of the papal see, the “unbroken succession” of bishops as the chief subject of his praise, and the accessories of splendour and power with which they were adorned, as incidents which served to render their characters and actions conspicuous. It is, therefore, to the “succession” of the Roman bishops my observations shall be addressed; and my inquiry shall be, not whether they were powerful and rich, but whether, in the supposition that the “unbroken succession” could be proved, it would constitute an argument for the superiority of their Church; and secondly, whether the evidence in favour of this argument is of such a nature as to bring conviction.

* Travels, Vol. I. p. 190.

If the simple fact, that the present Bishop of Rome is the successor, in a direct line, of the first who presided in that see, constitute an argument which proves the superiority of the Roman over all other Churches, it can only be, because no other "episcopal chair" can boast a similar succession. Did the "Irish Gentleman" make inquiries to satisfy himself, that the honour he ascribes to Rome was peculiar to her? Did he inquire whether the Anglican Church could not supply numerous cases of a similar nature? He contrasts the permanency of the Roman Church with the frequent changes and unsettlements in England—"while England herself has fallen under the sway of five different nations, the apostolic chair has defied the vicissitudes of time," &c.)—and appears to have forgotten, that although the *civil polity* of the country experienced destruction and change, the Church of England "has defied the vicissitudes of time," and can appeal to many of her cathedral histories, for proofs, that she, too, participates in the honour of the unbroken succession. But the line of succession in the Church of Rome is more extended. Is it to be understood, then, that whatsoever is more ancient, is also of greater authority? If this be so, Rome must have been for many centuries inferior in dignity to Antioch, and those other sees which, she confesses, were erected before Peter established the papacy; and could only have assumed power and authority when the more ancient churches had fallen, and at a period very long subsequent to the time at which she boasts that she was mother and mistress of all Christian congregations. Perhaps it may be said that the honour of a true succession is not to be ascribed to the British Churches, because they committed a breach of unity, and introduced erroneous doctrines—but the point at issue between the papal and the reformed communion is, on whom does the guilt of schism rest; and this, evidently, is a matter

to be determined, not by the argument of "succession," but by a consideration of the changes in discipline and doctrine from which schism or separation had its rise. We may affirm, therefore, that the tendency of any claim founded on the regularity of episcopal succession, cannot be ascertained without considering the claims of different Churches, and the evidences by which they are respectively supported.

Of all the arguments by which the Church of Rome would abet her pretensions, this of the unbroken succession in the papacy appears the most daring and untenable. I am not at all surprised to find it occasionally advanced before a select audience, consisting of a class for which the revisions of an Index Expurgatorius are unnecessary ; but, in a work in which the topics and the style would lead one to apprehend that it is designed for the instruction of those to whom history has not been sealed, it seems altogether unaccountable, that the desperate expedient should be adopted, of resting the authority of the Roman See on so frail and broken a reed as "succession." Who is ignorant of the manner in which the papal chair has been frequently and criminally invaded ? Who knows not the species of influence to which the sovereign pontiffs often owed their election—and the outrage and violence with which, all forms of election being disdained, many were forcibly intruded into the See of Rome ? We are not left dependant for a knowledge of such events on the suspicious testimony of Protestant writers, or even on the dubious allegations of those whose attachment to the Church of Rome was regulated by reason. No. We have the complaints of one so thoroughly possessed of zeal, that he gravely advanced, as argument in proof of Christ's presence with the Church, the monstrous vices under which it laboured, and which, he conceived, proved its existence miraculous—we have his complaints of the injustice and violence of various

papal usurpations, and the expression of his amazement at the difficulty of determining in some cases between conflicting pretensions.

The Irish Gentleman appears acquainted with the "Annals of Baronius," nor can he doubt the faithfulness of that uncompromising champion of the papacy. Will he accept his testimony as to the "succession?" "What was then the aspect of the holy Roman Church, how very foul, under the tyranny of unchaste women, as powerful as they were depraved, when, at their will, sees were changed, bishoprics given, and what is of unutterable horror, their paramours intruded into the chair of Peter—*pseudo pontiffs*, who should be named in the catalogue of the popes only for the uses of chronology; for who could say that men of such a character, illegally intruded by harlots, were lawful Roman Pontiffs. Nowhere is there mention made of the clergy electing, or afterwards consenting. The canons were all buried in silence, the decrees of popes (or bishops) were stifled, old traditions were proscribed, and the ancient customs in electing popes, as well as the sacred rites, and primitive practice, were all extinguished. Then, surely, Christ slept a deep sleep in the bark, and what was most to be lamented, there were no disciples to awake him."*

I will not offend my reader, nor endure, myself, the disgust of describing the lives or conduct of these monsters of iniquity,† as Baronius calls them, who usurped the see of Rome, but shall be contented with repeating, on his authority, that during the entire of the tenth century, their disorders afflicted the Church; and with proposing as a question, whether we should recognize here a chasm in the succession, or reject the testimony of the Cardinal historian. I make no comment on the morals of these sacrilegious

* Baronius Ann. 993. † Horrenda quam plurima monstra.

profligates. I regard simply historical testimony, of the least suspicious character, that, during a century, a system prevailed, whereby individuals, who were not Popes, held the Bishopric of Rome; and know no evidence, of equal or of any account, which testifies that the "succession" has been preserved.

But the disasters of the "unbroken succession" have been still more plainly recorded. In the eleventh century, there were three anti-popes, "simultaneous not successive," residing at Rome, and dividing the revenues between them. Which of them, or was any, the Pope? Let us hear the historian Spondanus, respecting a schism of later days. "Thus was produced, in the Church, a most foul and pernicious schism." "Still more marvellous, the right of the parties was so dubious and uncertain, that not only princes, but also most learned theologians and professors of law, as well as men of greatest piety were attached to each side. Nay, there were numbers, conspicuous for their miraculous powers who embraced each cause and called theirs holy, the adverse cause profane, nor could that matter ever be so determined as not to remain doubtful to very many." Such is the candid acknowledgment of the papal historian, at least of a historian whose attachment to the Church of Rome is beyond question. Did the foul schism he laments leave the line of succession unbroken? The utmost Spondanus is able to advance in favour of a cause he would faithfully have supported, is the expression of what is no more than a vague opinion. "It seems to have been the judgment of the Catholic Church (which ought to outweigh all arguments, visions, prophecies, miracles,) that Urban, and his successors who remained at Rome, were true and legitimate pontiffs."* Why has an infallible Church left the line of a succession depending on a

* Spondan, Ann. B. 78.

“seems to be.” There was a schism of fifty years’ duration, Popes at Avignon and Popes at Rome. The phrase “Babylonian captivity,” applied to a previous removal of the papal chair, testifies how deeply the calamity had wounded, yet have the councils left it a matter of conjecture in what line the succession was preserved, or whether in any, and “notwithstanding all that has been written on the subject it is at this day undetermined, which of the two” (Urban 6, or Clement 7,) was the lawful pope.*

I shall offer on this part of the subject only one quotation more. It is from Bellarmine, whose devotedness to the Roman Court and Church has never been disputed. After the very straitest of his sect, he held opinions respecting the infallibility of the pope, which frequently occasioned him inconvenience, and put to the proof his ingenuity and learning. “John XXIII.” he writes “is accused of most pernicious heresy, for he is said to have denied the future life and the resurrection of the flesh. I answer that it is not altogether certain and beyond doubt, that John XXIII. was a pope, and, therefore, it is not necessary to defend him. There were, in his time, three who claimed the papal title, Gregory XII. Benedict XIII. and John XXIII., nor could it easily be determined which of them was true and lawful pope, since there were not wanting to each, (supporters or) patrons of the greatest learning.”† That is to say, there were very learned men who thought that neither of the three should be accounted a true pope, the champions of each holding the adverse parties in disesteem. If our traveller had remembered his historical reading, and applied to the various schisms in the see of Rome, the principle, that wherever there was contention between two claimants, there was

* Grier’s Epit. Conc. Gen. p. 212.

† Bell. De Pont : Lib. 4, C. 14.

doubt upon each, he would have been, it is probable, less peremptory in insisting on the argument of the "unbroken succession."

Although so much scandal was given by the iniquities and the contentions of popes in the middle ages, yet it cannot be denied that multitudes, (especially, as a partial historian* with much naïveté, observes, the "*remote* northerns") revered the chair into which, by fraud or violence, or by canonical election, the pontiff had been installed; a species of devotedness, which would have occasioned more amazement, if we were ignorant that the extravagancies and wickedness of the human heart have sought an exercise and an object, in a worship still more frightful and abominable than that which was offered to a vicious man. The Irish Gentleman appears edified by this prostration of man's reason, and eulogises the means which "*human* policy" had devised or adopted, in order to effect so desirable an object—"the repression of the right of private judgment,"† and, "if any resisted or dissented, no less awful a penalty than the forfeiture of eternal salvation."‡ The reader who desires fuller information as to the manner in which the Irish Gentleman avows and applauds the policy which adopted such modes of guarding unity, must consult "the Travels." Here such sentiments are stated as briefly as the requisite clearness will allow.

It is necessary, however, to be more precise in representing the arguments to which our Traveller has had recourse, and it is gratifying to be enabled to state, that whatever other errors may have disfigured the ancient "*monuments of ecclesiastical literature*," there seems no reason to suspect that the Fathers of the first four centuries had adopted any such policy as that by which Rome has maintained her power.

* Bar. Ann.

† Travels, Vol. I. p. 212.

‡ Ibid. 195.

The reader will judge whether anything less than the utter impossibility of finding more favourable testimony can account for the quotation of such passages as follow—"Truly," says Gregory of Nazianzum, in speaking of the mischiefs that arose from the exercise of private judgment; "there should have been a law among us, whereby (as, among the Jews, young men were not allowed to read certain books of Scripture) not all men, and at all times, but certain persons only, and on certain occasions, should be permitted to discuss the points of faith."* There *should have been* a law to restrict private judgment. Unless our Traveller have the hardihood of the ready-witted Carthusian, who showed among the relics of a convent, the sword *that Balaam wished for*, he must, on reflection discern in Gregory's testimony, decisive proof, that in his day, the judgment was unfettered.

The quotation from Jerome places this matter in a still clearer light.† In all menial arts there must be some one to show the way, the art of understanding the Scriptures alone, *is open to every reader*. Here, learned or unlearned, we can all interpret, "the tattling old woman, the doting old man, the wily sophist, all, all here presume; they tear texts asunder, and dare to become teachers before they have learned." It is very singular that the little prelude in which our Traveller introduces this remarkable passage, did not suggest to him its character and bearing. The expostulation of Jerome furnishes abundant proof, that, in his day, the "Commons of God's people" had not been closed. Imbecility, arrogance, ignorance, were not regarded, then, as justifying so monstrous an usurpation.

Even the apprehensions entertained by Jerome of evil consequences likely to arise from the unrestricted perusal of God's word, do not appear, great as his

* Travels, Vol. I. p. 212.

† Ibid.

influence must have been, to have suggested to him the idea of procuring or proposing any law of restriction. He writes precisely as a Protestant would have written, who dreaded the exercise of uninstructed faculties on the mysteries of Scripture, but who knew, at the same time, that there was not, and ought not to be, a rule which should deny what God had commanded to be written for his creatures, or give it only on conditions incompatible with the exercise of reason. In a word, Jerome wrote as a Protestant, (some will affirm not a wise one,) in a Protestant Church, and strange to say, the Irish Gentleman seems almost persuaded to believe so. “St. Jerome, too, in a passage, whose just sarcasm will be found to fit some of the Bible-expounders of the present day, *as closely as if they had been measured for it*, thus speaks.”* Then follow the expressions already quoted, expressions such as have been spoken *in* and *at* the Protestant Church of the present day, as well as in the Church of primitive times, but which imply the unrestricted right of private judgment, and could not, with the least pretence to propriety, be spoken of his own Church by a presbyter of modern Rome. I shall add a single remark, not for the necessities of my argument, but in justice to the character of the calumniated Jerome. The passage in which he is represented as censuring the indiscriminate study of the Sacred Volume, is extracted from an Epistle, which is throughout from the commencement to the conclusion, *an exhortation to Scriptural studies*, an Epistle which “the Bible-expounders of the present day” may confess to be as eloquent and as earnest an address in favour of the great object they have at heart, as they have published in the reports of their public meetings. The ruling passion of the times is described in the sentence which, with his usual suc-

* Travels, Vol. I. p. 212.

cess, "the Traveller" groped out, and is noticed for the purpose of explaining why Jerome thought it advisable to further the object he recommends by so various and minute instructions. In a word, where the Bible is thrown open to all, some may abuse it. The Council of Trent and the Irish Gentleman, defender of his country's ancient faith,* the defender!—proh pudor—of the faith of Sedulius and Claudius, and Patrick and Bertram, and Scotus Erigena, would prevent abuse by forbidding all exercise of private judgment, Jerome and the Protestant Churches, by endeavouring to assist and guide it.

The penalty attached to the crime of exercising private judgment, and not submitting implicitly to the Church, "was no less awful than the forfeiture of eternal salvation; and however stern and tremendous such a decree must appear, they who had been taught that there was but 'one Lord, *one faith*, one baptism,' and who held, therefore, that he who was not in the ark must perish by the deluge, could not, with any sincerity, pronounce a more lenient sentence."† Instead of expressing what the principle here confessed, and the praise of it by an Irish Gentleman, excites in the mind of the writer, and may excite in the reader, I beg attention to the peculiar circumstances under which the Church of Rome deals forth her thunderbolts, as they are suggested to the mind by the expression "one faith," in the above citation from the "Travels."

The sixth decree of the Council of Ephesus declared, "that it should not be lawful to utter, write, or compose any other faith than that which had been defined by the Nicene Fathers;‡ and that, should any dare to publish any other creed—if bishops, they should be degraded from their bishoprics, clerics from

* Travels, Dedication.

† Ibid. Vol. I. p. 195.

‡ Conc. Gen. Eph. Rom. 1608.

their order, and if laics, they should be anathematized." The Church of Rome has added what may be termed a creed, consisting of twelve articles, to this Nicene confession of faith, which had been so carefully guarded; and instead of shrinking from the anathema thus incurred, issues, herself, the menace of excommunication against all those who will not despise the Council of Ephesus and submit to the Council of Trent, consenting to believe, that the way of salvation is narrowed by twelve restrictions which the intolerance of modern times has erected. A brief consideration of this exercise of power may not be unprofitable.

In the third session of the Council of Trent it was esteemed necessary to make a solemn profession of faith, and the Nicene Creed was that in which the assembled Fathers expressed their belief, introducing the recital of it by the following preamble: "Wherefore the symbol of faith which the holy Roman Church uses, in which all who profess the faith of Christ of necessity agree, the sure *and only* foundation against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, in the words in which, in all Churches, it is repeated, the Council has thought it proper to recite." The Nicene Creed follows. Thus, in the year 1546, it was declared by a Pope and Council, that "*the only sure foundation*" was a creed which the Church of England, as well as of Rome, professes. In the year 1564, the "Creed of Pius the Fourth" is promulgated to the world—by which it appears, that the declaration of the former year was impious and false—that the creed of Nice and England is not a sure foundation—and that whoso would be saved must enter heaven, branded with the anathema of Ephesus, and condemning the third session of the Council of Trent—the very council of which especially he swears to receive everything delivered, declared, and defined.*

* Creed of Pius IV. Bul. Inj. Nob.

Where can such inconsistency find a parallel? But, to proceed.

The first of the articles added to the Nicene Creed is a promise to accept, and most firmly retain, all the apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, which, it will be remembered, have had no stamp of approval set upon them, and are accordingly abandoned to the caprice of private judgment. The second article is a promise to receive also the sacred Scripture, according to that sense in which it is received by "the Church, whose it is to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the holy Scriptures; nor will I ever receive and interpret it unless according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers."* Before commenting on this strait engagement, it is right that we compare it with the decree in compliance with which it is exacted. "The decree concerning the edition and use of the sacred Scriptures," passed in the fourth session of the Council, prohibited all interpretation "contrary to that sense which the Church has held and holds," "or even *contrary* to the unanimous consent of the Fathers." The decree restricted liberty of interpretation, if *all* the Fathers were *unanimous* in opinion; but the Creed, in the true spirit of that ambition which thinks nothing gained while aught remains to gain, allows no exercise of judgment, or right of interpretation, wherever *any two* of the Fathers *may have happened to differ*. The difference between the limitations set in these cases will appear by a very obvious instance. Many of the Fathers—for example, St. Augustine, Chrysostom, Theophilact—consider the "rock" on which our Lord declared he would build his Church to be the rock *which Peter had named*—Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world. Other Fathers have imagined a sense in which the declaration might have been applied to

* Creed of Pius IV. Bul. Inj. Nob.

Peter himself, by whom, in virtue of the gift of the keys, the "door of faith was opened" to the first Gentile convert, Cornelius. Here, then, was a portion of Scripture, respecting which the Fathers were not unanimous, and which, accordingly, so long as the Church pronounced no opinion on its meaning, *the decree left open* to private interpretation. But the Creed is more cautious or more tyrannical, and, as it were, expunges the expression from the Bible, because the Fathers have not all had the same opinion of its meaning. To obey *the decree*, it is necessary for a votary to say no more than that he will not, where all authorities have approved one sense, embrace a contrary; although he retains the privilege to choose with whom he shall agree, where there is difference of opinion. To profess the creed in sincerity, he must add—wherever the Fathers, in their freedom, have differed as to the meaning of a Scriptural passage, I am to regard them as sentinels warning me, that, into that region of Scripture, as if pestilence were there, I must not enter. How much of the Scripture may be opened or shut according to the operation of one or other of these regulations, it would be no light matter to determine. If Erasmus is to be regarded as governed by such a rule as the decree, he was safe in believing that Christ is the foundation of the Church. If the despotism of the Creed were to prevail, not only is *his* condemnation pronounced for ascribing due honour to the Lord, but the *annotators of the Rheimish Testament* and their abettors, also are damned, for their gloss that the Church was builded on Peter.

But how are the dissenting Fathers to be regarded? According to the Creed of Pius they were all wrong; they were all separated from the Church, and beyond the pale of salvation.* Yet they were not de-

* "This true Catholic faith *out of which no one can be*

clared accursed. No; many of them were styled saints, and are solicited as intercessors with God for his creatures. What is to be thought? Was there a time when it was not forbidden to study Holy Scripture? Are the limits of this time to be ascertained by finding out some point at which men ceased to differ in opinion? Did the old Church continue so long as the Bible was open? Did a new Church rise in judgment when the Bible became sealed? In short, does the Church of Rome pronounce that he who shall use the liberty which was enjoyed so long as men of reputed sanctity differed in their interpretation of Scripture, is, by endeavouring to participate in the freedom, and imitate the example of the saints to whom he prays, excluded from the Church here in earth, and, after this life, consigned to everlasting damnation?

The superficial may say, that these questions are uncalled for; that the pious men of all ages—the clergy, the learned, are free to study Scripture—that it is only from the ignorant among the laity its fullness of instruction is withheld. Every Roman Catholic Bishop is bound even more straitly than the meanest of his lay-subjects. He has taken a solemn oath that he will observe the articles of that most inconsistent creed which pledges him not to receive any portion of Scripture in the interpretation of which the Fathers were not unanimous, and thus taunts his slavery with the astounding intelligence that nine parts in ten of the Scriptures, and all the Fathers, belong not to the Church in which he is fettered, but to the Church where that spirit is with whom is liberty.

There are other inconsistencies in this Creed of Pius IV., or of the Council of Trent. The priest-

saved," &c. The conclusion is too well known to need recital.

hood of the Church of Rome (at least, every priest canonically appointed to the care of a parish) has sworn not to interpret the Scriptures except according to the unanimous consent of the fathers. The obligation thus recognized by an oath on the part of the clergy is acknowledged also by the laity of their communion.* The Council of Trent found it necessary to publish a list of the Scriptural Books which it accounted canonical. Had there been a Canon of the Fathers so fixed and so well known, that it was unnecessary to enumerate those authorized interpreters? No; there is no such recognition of the testimonies of ancient witnesses as can enable an inquiring and obedient member of the Church of Rome to read the Scriptures with the aid of commentators whom he knows to have been approved. On the contrary, by that strange infatuation which so often marks the proceedings of those who think infallibility can be lodged in man, the Council of Trent has increased the difficulty of discovering orthodox expositors, appointing a committee to examine and revise all manner of books, and not guarding any, even the most venerable, from their censures.

Some may say, that the labours of the congregation of the Index have made the way plain. Inquirers have nothing henceforth to do, but purchase an Index Expurgatorius, and, straightway, they can discover, with infallible certainty, the guides whose unanimous consent shall render it safe for them to hear God's answer to the question, what shall they do to be saved. This is not so. The congregation of the Index (or rather the divines whose researches suggested the framing such a congregation) were

* Lords' Com. March 21, 1825. "Is the Creed of Pius IV. the Creed acknowledged in the Irish Roman Catholic Church? Right Rev. Dr. Doyle. "Yes; every Catholic acknowledges that Creed."

appointed and empowered to act in the eighteenth session of the Council of Trent. In the twenty-fifth their labours were completed, but the Council found it inconvenient, in consequence of the multifarious nature of their remarks and censures, to examine them, and referred the entire matter to the Pope, for his decision.

Thus, the authority with which the Council might have invested "the Index" was withheld. Its censures are not warnings to be of necessity attended to; its recommendation is not an infallible guide; and thus, in countries where it is not received, there is the mortifying conviction, that, to discover the Fathers of the Church whose writings are the approved comments on Scripture, is a matter wholly impossible, until a new Council shall have afforded some assistance to the inquirer; and that, in the mean time, he is a perjurer, or an apostate from the Church of Rome, who shall read a chapter of the Bible.

Such is the condition of Roman Catholics in Ireland. Here the decisions of the congregation have no manner of authority. "The Index Expurgatorius," says Dr. Murray, "has no authority whatever in Ireland; it has never been received in these countries; and I doubt much whether there be ten people in Ireland who have ever seen it. It is a sort of censorship of books, established in Rome, and it is not even received in Spain, where they have a censorship of their own; in these countries it has no force whatever."* How, then, in these countries, shall a submissive votary of the Papal Church make preparation to read the Scripture? He is first to find out an authoritative recognition of "the Fathers,"—a search not more likely to terminate in success than that after "the fifth veda." He is then to find out where these undiscoverable authorities

* *Com. Com.* May 17, 1825. Most Rev. Dr. Murray.

have been unanimous in opinion, in which, if he can succeed, or even if he can show that any one of them has been consistent with himself, he may demonstrate Dr. Doyle's theorem, that the Creed of Pius IV. and the 'Thirty-nine Articles are synonymous.* When he has successfully accomplished this superhuman undertaking, he may read the Bible; but, until then, he has solemnly bound himself to eschew God's word. Should he violate his oath, the ark in which he is said to be safe, while prosecuting his search—the ark whose name is mystery—casts him out to perish—like that gloomy boat of eastern story, which defied the raging of winds and waves, but dreaded the breath of prayer; and, vanishing at the utterance of a holy word, gave up to the fury of a merciless waste of water, the voyager who, in a moment of sore peril, had forgotten his compact of impiety, and invoked the name of God.

And must it be confessed, that, according to the creed which every Roman Catholic acknowledges, the penalty of everlasting damnation is incurred by an inhabitant of this country, if he presume to read the Bible? Perhaps, although he cannot discover for himself the Fathers who are recognized as faithful and consentient commentators, the Church, in accordance with another part of his profession, has provided against his suffering very grievous incon-

* "The chief points to be discussed are, the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures, faith, justification, the mass, the sacraments, the authority of tradition. of councils, of the Pope, the celibacy of the clergy, language of the liturgy, invocation of saints, respect for images, prayers for the dead. On most of these, it appears to me, that there is no essential difference between Catholics and Protestants; *the existing diversity of opinion arises, in most cases, from certain forms of words, which admit of satisfactory explanation, or from the ignorance or misconceptions which ancient prejudice or ill will produce and strengthen, but which could be removed.*"
—*Letter to Mr. Robinson.*

venience. He promises to receive the Bible in the sense in which the Church receives it. Perhaps the Church has made that sense known, and in such a form as to render the search for a religion among the Fathers unnecessary. Alas, no—the votary who promises to receive Scripture agreeably to the explanation of the Church, experiences a new difficulty here,—for no such explanation has been vouchsafed.* It does not appear that there exists in any language, a Bible to which comments are appended, such as could properly be styled notes of which the Church approves; which explain the true and acknowledged sense of Scripture. What is then to be understood by the letter and spirit of the Roman Creed, except that it prohibits the reading of Scripture under penalty of eternal damnation?

But is it found by experience,^f that the Bible is a sealed book to the Roman Catholics of Ireland? No. The extreme rigour of the law is tempered by mildness in its execution, and, notwithstanding prohibitions of such a nature as we have been considering, very great numbers of our countrymen, instigated by conscience or seduced by Bible Societies, are permitted, at their own will, to disregard their obli-

* Lords' Com. March 21, 1825. "Have you, in any instances, allowed the circulation of the Bible, without notes?" Right Rev. J. Doyle—"I do not know that we have." "You consider yourselves pledged to all matters contained in these notes?" "No, not by any means." "The notes carry, in our editions of the Bible, no weight." Dr. Murray, in the course of the same inquiry, was asked, "what are the particular notes, by what authority prepared, or where are they to be found, which, in your opinion, should accompany the Bible?" The answer taught, that, up to May, 1825, no such notes existed, and that those now appended to the Bible by Dr. Murray have no better than private authority. "I have myself procured an edition of the Bible, which is now ready to be issued, a stereotype edition, with *notes such as I approve of.*"

gations and slay their souls. There are prohibitions so inconsistent and absurd as to be ineffectual; and when the Church of Rome appeals to experience, and says that she is not to be charged with the guilt of sealing the Bible, because, in point of fact, her votaries have opened it, she is not acquitting herself of having imposed unjust restrictions, but confessing that they were so strait as to force all her children to "desert the ark" and encounter "the deluge." Even the Irish Gentleman, who professes so entire resignation to the will of his Church, is not able to acquiesce in the slavery to which she would consign him. Strongly as he asserts, and eloquently as he eulogises, the rigid rule which would make the interpretation of Scripture, by private judgment, death, his practice as directly opposes, as his professions fully assent to, the antichristian enactment. He, without hesitation, advances his own readings of Scripture—puts aside, without scruple or notice, the version which Trent pronounces authentic, and, upon at least one important and remarkable occasion, formally advances the interpretation of a Protestant Divine, as that by which the vulgate, and the Douay, and the stereotyped Dublin versions of Dr. Murray, are discredited, and the young convert's conjectural emendation confirmed.* But not for this is the handwriting of menace in the Creed obliterated. The soul that interpreteth shall die, is the legend which has been inscribed on the portals of the Church of Rome. The seven deadly sins, the four cardinal vices, the habits which could justify foul suspicions,† all may enter freely—but God's word and man's reason are excluded. Is it damnable to doubt that such things should not be?

* Travels, Vol. I. pp. 249—268. The Travels contain many similar inconsistencies. One example is sufficient for the purposes of our argument.

† Travels, Vol. I. p. 4.

CHAPTER XII.

Infallibility. Scripture not to be adduced by Roman Catholics, because its meaning has been left unsettled—Erasmus—Jerome—Chrysostom. False translation—Creed of Pius IV.

THE dogma of infallibility consists of two parts: one, that the Church of Christ cannot err; a second, that the Church so very highly favoured is the Roman. The arguments, by which this doctrine is defended, are evidence to prove that the gift of infallibility was actually conferred, and reasoning to demonstrate its necessity.

The evidences are, for the most part, Scriptural precepts and promises, addressed by our blessed Lord to his Church, which are interpreted as if they signified, not only that the kingdoms of the world are finally to become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ, and that in order to their being thus converted, a religious ministration should be ever maintained, but that the Church so preserved should always be visible and never permitted to err. The testimonies of uninspired writers are adduced, principally, to show, that the Church of Rome, has rightful supremacy over all congregations of the faithful, and must therefore either possess or participate in the divine attribute with which the true Church is said to be endowed.

The advocates of Protestant principle, are usually so strong in their cause, and so bold in their freedom, that they pay little regard to punctilio in any contest with their adversaries. Therefore they have willingly encountered arguments which their antagonists should

never have been permitted to use, if proprieties were observed, and like the hardy cavaliers of more poetical times have shown love for their opponents by conquering them under circumstances in which "the combat" should have been accounted a condescension and an indulgence.

We have no right to complain of the consequences. Every argument which industry could discover, or ingenuity devise has been broken upon the Protestant Church; and the cause of religious freedom has been effectually secured against the despotism which would counteract the designs of Providence, by extinguishing reason in his worshippers, as well as against the impious daring which would abuse his gifts to licentiousness. But, while important good has been attained, one thing has been neglected, namely, to remind advocates in the service of the Church of Rome, that they have been, in all controversies, availing themselves of arguments from which, if they respected the exactments of their Church, they were precluded.

For example: it used to be said (until I read the *Travels* and learned how they were valued, I thought the advocates of Rome had become wiser) that our blessed Lord built his Church on Peter. The reader need not be alarmed. I have not the least idea of engaging in the examination of a passage which is so thoroughly understood, and on which, since Barrow's *Treatise on the Papal Supremacy*, no additional light has been or need be thrown. I adduce the text, not with a notion that it requires to be explained, but rather for the purpose of showing that a Roman Catholic should not advance it. He has solemnly pledged himself not to receive *any* Scripture, save according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers. What is the *unanimous* determination of the Fathers here? Are they all agreed with St. Augustine? If so, they pronounce that the

foundation of the Church was not Peter. With Chrysostom? They pronounce again that Peter was not that rock. Do they follow Cyprian or Origen? They affirm that no honour was conferred on Peter higher than was bestowed on the other apostles, or, indeed, it might perhaps be said, higher than is granted to every faithful Christian. Are they followers of Jerome? If his comments on the Gospel according to St. Matthew are correctly given, they profess to believe, that, in some metaphorical sense, the privilege was conferred on Peter. But why should I, to no purpose, occupy my reader. The judgment of the Fathers is not unanimous as to the meaning of any of those passages of Scripture by which infallibility is patronized; whosoever, therefore, has been bound *not* to receive Scripture unless according to (*nisi juxta*) the unanimous agreement of these interpreters, is pledged not to ascribe any meaning to a passage on which they have differed.

Indeed, the principle which places "on their parole" if I may use such an expression, certain texts of Scripture which have been a kind of household troops for controversy, is one which should exercise a much wider influence, and, very probably, to men of scrupulous conscience and extensive inquiry, would shut up the whole Bible. "I will never receive Scripture, unless according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers." "I admit (*admitto* is the term) Scripture agreeably to the interpretation of the Church." Whenever therefore, a member of the Church of Rome adduces a Scriptural passage on which the Fathers have not been unanimous, or the Church has not determined, he is availing himself of an argument which he had renounced, and is, by the very fact of using it, confessing that he believes the Church of Rome in error, and that he is a Protestant.

The reader may be desirous to see some proof of

that difference in opinion among the Fathers which renders it inconsistent with the principles of a Roman Catholic to avail himself of expressions in Scripture on which the argument for Papal supremacy is grounded. The testimony of Erasmus alone should satisfy the Irish Gentleman that there was no unanimity on the subject. Indeed, it would appear as if the obvious diversity of opinion which prevailed among the Fathers was not unknown to him, and that in consequence, he has abstained from quoting what, without their consent, he was not warranted to receive. Perhaps, the abstinence from Scripture which is so characteristic a feature of the Travels may have had its origin in the Trent confession. Protestants may be amazed that the Bible should not have been the book to which an inquirer for religion had immediate recourse, but if they recollected that the inquirer was solemnly pledged not to "admit" it, unless according to the explanation of his Church—(an explanation which has never been given)—not to consult it, unless he had made up his mind from the Fathers, (writers who would have done much more for him than for themselves had they assisted him to so goodly a consummation) they would, perhaps, have spared themselves at least all feeling of surprise at finding the Bible neglected. There are other feelings from which they ought not to be free,—such as are naturally awakened on witnessing the place assigned by professing Christians to the Book of God's Word. In the early Councils, the Bible was solemnly placed in honour in sight of all, was the standard to which reference was invariably made, and by which all discrepancies of opinion were reconciled or corrected. Now, the Fathers are at the feast, the Bible with the neglected solitary at the Gate—or, more appropriately for the comparison with early times, the Fathers are in counsel—they constitute the legisla-

tive assembly of the Church, and, when a division is called, the unceremonious dismissal, STRANGERS WITHDRAW, is addressed to God's Holy Scriptures.

If our Traveller were under due subjection to the principles of his Church, it is not surprising that he read not, at least did not refer to the book which she has so carefully prohibited. Our wonder should be that he cited any passage from Scripture, and especially that he did not abstain from all notice of the sixth chapter of St. John, placed under the Ban, as he must have felt it to be, by St. Augustine's commentary, and having occasioned, as is well known to every reader of Church history, considerable distraction to the divines assembled in the Council of Trent.*

* It is probable, that there is scarcely a word in many Scriptural expressions applied to the eucharist which has not furnished occasion for diversities of opinion. The disputes which have arisen as to the meaning of the first word in the sentence, "This is my body" are well known to most readers. Protestants urged, that what our blessed Lord called "This" was the same thing which he also called his body. He took bread, not what had been bread, but was then changed, and said this, that is, this bread—is, (not shall be) my body, from which it has been contended, that no *substantial* change can be implied in words which indicate, that what our blessed Saviour held in his hand, to which he applied the pronoun "this" was, at the same time bread and also his body. To meet this argument in proof of a figurative interpretation, advocates of the doctrine declared in the councils of Lateran and Trent, have proposed explanations of the vexatious "this," equally at variance with each other and the truth. The author of the *Medulla Theologica*, seventh edition, published at Nice with approbation and permission, speaking of the various interpretations offered by heretics, admits that the explanations of the "Catholic doctors," have been various also, and, omitting those of inferior merit, proposes as most satisfactory, the explanation "that by the pronoun 'hoc,' or 'hic,' nothing is denoted which exists in the moment when the word is pronounced, but something which exists at the end of the

But, to return from my digression and give proof, that those passages of Scripture by which the Church of Rome seeks to justify the papal pretensions, contain testimonies which, because of the diversity of opinion as to their meaning, she should not have adduced. The reader well acquainted with the subject will pardon me while I endeavour, in a brief space, to satisfy the less instructed. The Scholium of Erasmus alone on the address to Peter, should be sufficient for the occasion. "On this rock," &c. On this rock, that is, on this *steadfast profession of faith*, I will build my Church. In this interpretation, Theophylact, and Chrysostom, and St. Augustine agree."*

pronunciation of the expression, and that the form of speech before repeated, is to be understood according to the last instant of the utterance of the words." Hoc vel "hic nihil demonstrari quod sit eo tempore quo profertur," &c. Med. Theol. Vol. ii. p. 78. Even this interpretation is to be understood in a two-fold sense, the pronoun being taken either substantively, to signify the substance of the body which *is to be*, or adjectively, which is explained in a manner not at all unfavourable to the figurative interpretation.

I have alluded to such diversity of opinion merely to illustrate a principle, and shall therefore content myself with instancing by a single example, the inaccuracy of the definition, by which the Church of Rome explains the pronoun, "this." If a man hold a paper in his hand and say, "this" (setting his signature to it) is a bank note" although it has undergone a change in the interval between his first word and the last, we account the expression correct; but if he say "this" (and then substitute another paper instead of that which he first held) "is a bank note," we consider the proposition false and the act a juggle, accounting the term one which may be used after an alteration has taken place in the *quality* of the thing to which it was applied, provided that the thing itself, that is, the substance of it, has not departed. Many a tour de phrase must be sought out by those who would maintain an indefensible dogma.

"Things had begun, strengthen themselves by ill."

* Schol. in S. Mat. Erasmus expresses his surprise that there are some who distort or divert the expression to the

To the names enumerated by Erasmus very many of high authority could be added. Origen, for example, denies Peter's exclusive right to the name assigned him by our Lord; affirming that every one who believes "in Christ who is the Rock" partakes of the qualities for which the name should be given, and that thus, all who are Christians have fellowship in the name of Peter; that which was spoken to him in the letter being addressed to them in the spirit. I very much doubt whether the name of Jerome also should not be inserted in such a catalogue. His note is as follows: "To Simon who believed in *the Rock Christ* he gave the name of Peter, and, according to the metaphor of a Rock it is rightly said to him, I will build my Church *on thee*." For two reasons I am disposed to believe, that the two words in italics have been intruded upon Jerome's commentary, by some of those copiers whom candid writers belonging to the Church of Rome, as well as Protestants have so often complained of. In the first place, such words *are not said* to Peter, as the Roman Catholic reader will find by turning to his Bible, even as he reads in Dr. Murray's stereotyped edition. It is not to be supposed that, in this there is any departure from the letter and the spirit of Jerome's translation, the Latin Vulgate; and it recites Christ's promise as a declaration that he will build his Church on the Rock. To suppose, therefore, that Jerome explains, as an expression of our Lord, the words "I will build my Church on thee," is to suppose, that the commentary on the passage and the translation of it were directly at variance; that he was giving a reason for what did not exist. As there is evidently, there-

pope. "Proinde miror esse qui locum hunc detorqueant ad Romanum Pontificem," &c. The sense in which Erasmus applies it to the Pope, is one in which Protestants may concur.

fore, opposition between the translator's text and his note, as there is also variance between the first part of the note and the second, and as the first part accurately corresponds with the text, which the second contradicts, I am inclined to believe, rather, that the transcribers did this injury to the passage, than that Jerome, himself, wrote so inconsistently. A second reason which induces me to suspect interpolation is, that I have found the identical words, "super te," intruded into the Latin text of Chrysostom, in order to improve his meaning. The orator in a discourse, the purport of which was to prove the divinity of our blessed Saviour, is enumerating the instances of power, and authority, by which he, as it were, asserted his superior title. One of these is giving Peter a name; one is the declaration that he will build a Church. "Thou art Peter; I will build my Church." Thus in the original; but the Latin translator, not thinking the passage furnished enough for his purpose, boldly intrudes the necessary words. "*On thee I will build my Church.*"* Transcribers would not, dare not, without a certainty of detection, exercise so unceremonious authority over Scripture, and, hence, perhaps it has come to pass, that Jerome's interpretation of Scripture has been permitted to remain, while his note has been constrained to submit to the rule of the country and take up the requisite portion of alloy. When so daring a liberty was taken with a writer who, in the same discourse which was thus debased, directly stated that the Church was built "on the faith" which Peter "had confessed,"† it is not very hazardous to suppose that Jerome experienced a similar alteration, the text of the Scrip-

* Homilia 55 in Matthæum, Paris edition, A. D. 1603. Frontonis Ducœi Societ. Iesu. recognita, &c. &c. also the Antwerp Latin edition of 1614.

† *Ἐπὶ πιστεὶ τῆς ὁμολογίας.*

ture escaping in the one case, as the original Greek in the other, and thus, in each instance, a mean being provided, whereby the adulteration is detected.

However the question is to be decided, it is most evident, that the interpretations of the Fathers are of such a character as to preclude the professors of the Creed of Pius from the production in argument, or even from considering in study, the passage on which they have differed. On what, then, can they rely for the primacy of the Apostle Peter? On the gift of the keys? Even supposing this to have been a peculiar privilege,—it was exercised in the case of the first Gentile convert, to whom Peter “opened the door of faith,”—the Lord, in his wisdom and mercy, influencing by a miracle, the apostle who was most bigoted, if we may so say, to Jewish prejudice, that he should be foremost in opening the free gospel of his crucified Master to all nations and people. Will they advance the precept of our Lord, when three times Peter expressed his love, as is related in the conclusion of the Gospel of St. John? It is strange that the love and mercy of Christ shall be so abused to controversy, and that the gracious words in which he restores Peter to the place he had forfeited, and signifies the restoration to his associates, shall be distorted, as if they bestowed, what neither Peter ever aspired to, or the other apostles acknowledged—superiority. But, reason has been abjured, and therefore Scripture has been misinterpreted. However, the same oath which binds the Romish clergy, the same obligation which constrains the laity to hold all exercise of private judgment prohibited, binds them with equal straitness to submit to the judgment of the Fathers; and thus writes St. Augustine—“Who afterwards, that from his remoteness he might be brought near, (*ex longinquo ut propinquus fieret*,) heard, after the resurrection, ‘Lovest thou me?’ and said, ‘I love.’ And thus saying, he

was brought near, who, by denying, had removed himself; and by a thrice repeated expression of love, he became absolved from the thrice repeated denial, (*solveret trinam vocem negationis*).” Can the Scripture which is thus explained, be adduced as favouring Rome in her controversy with reason?

Let no reader imagine that the passages from the New Testament to which I have here alluded, and others of similar character, could ever, by any ingenuity of fair construction, lend authority to the papal claims. In all sincerity, I repeat, that the only reason why I do not enlarge on their meaning, and show that, beyond all cavil or question, they are unserviceable to these pretensions, is, that I do not wish to inflict unnecessary tediousness on my reader, and that even juvenile controversialists can no longer be deceived by citations which are now universally understood. I have referred to Scripture, rather as furnishing occasion to illustrate a general principle, than with the idea of being its interpreter. The principle is, that members of the Church of Rome usurp a Protestant privilege and deny their own faith, when they appeal to Scripture. All are supposed to have declared—ecclesiastics have sworn—that they will not receive it, unless according to the interpretation of the Church;—the Church has not condescended to publish any authentic explanation. They have sworn that they will not receive it, except according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers—they have no authentic enumeration of these highly exalted interpreters, and there is scarcely a text in the New Testament on which the fathers have been unanimous. The Bible, therefore, committed to the discretion of faithful Roman Catholics, under an oath, that until the Church pronounce, and the Fathers agree, they will not strive to understand it, must be intended for no other purpose than display,—that

they may boast before the heretic, how liberally knowledge is conceded to them, and employ the Scriptures as the daughters of the Vicar of Wakefield were to use the guineas which a prudent mother confided to their keeping, telling them that they might sometimes, by well concerted accident, let them be seen, but giving the strictest prohibition that they were never to change them.

The title of Roman Catholics to quote Scripture being, so evidently, a thing of nought, it was not unreasonable to expect that, in adducing testimonies from uninspired writers, they would be more than ordinarily scrupulous; and yet, in these they appear to be just as eager to press into the service of their cause whatever may seem to be useful, and as indifferent to the issue of a cross-examination, as they have shown themselves with respect to the more solemn and decisive testimony. The Irish Gentleman has adduced two passages of this character,—the one recommended by the name of Optatus, the other by the still more ancient and more honoured patronage of Irenæus. He cannot willingly consent to resign them, for they are certainly more favourable to his purpose than any others he has adduced; and yet, it is only necessary to pay respect to the opinions of distinguished members of the Church of Rome, in order to become persuaded that neither of these passages can, in strict propriety, be ascribed to its reputed author.

The testimony purporting to be that of Optatus, is thus introduced—"In a still more Popish spirit, St. Optatus (a Bishop of Milevis, in the fourth century,) thus writes:—'You cannot deny that St. Peter, *the chief of the apostles*, established an episcopal chair at Rome. This chair was one, that all might preserve unity by the union they had with it; so that whoever set up a chair against it, should be a

schismatic and an offender.'''* This is not a very literal translation of the words in the original; but it would not, perhaps, have called for censure, were it not that a most remarkable expression has been omitted. In the Latin, after the words chief or head of the apostles, there follows, "whence also he was called Cephass,"—an expression, in itself, worthy of note, because of the strange ignorance of which it convicts its author, as also for the commentaries to which it has furnished occasion. Another circumstance should also be noticed, namely, that immediately after the declaration, that the setter up of a rival cathedral must be held a schismatic and a sinner, we have in the passage ascribed to Optatus, in the original, a list of the Bishops of Rome, ending with the name of Siricius, whom he claims as his associate. "Siricius hodie, qui noster est socius."

Now it has been proved to demonstration, that Siricius was not Bishop of Rome until several years after the time in which Optatus wrote his work against the Donatists—the work in which the alleged passage is found. The date of the work is ascertained by the testimony of Jerome; and, at that date, Damasus was the Roman Bishop. The device by which commentators belonging to the Church of Rome endeavour to escape from the obvious inconvenience of this anachronism, is to allege that some individual, in times immediately subsequent to that of Optatus, inserted, in copying the saint's treatise, a name which completed the catalogue of Roman Bishops.† For the derivation of the Apostle Peter's

* Travels, Vol. I.

† Annotatio Albaspinæi—Damas. Siricius hodie—Fr. Balduinus scribit sibi hæc videri non Optati esse sed alicujus paulo post eum scriptoris. Nam constat Optatum scripsisse hos libros circa annum 370 Siricium vero non fuisse creatum Episcopum ante annum 393. See the Paris edition of Optatus, A. D. 1676, in which the arguments of Balduinus are

name, a similar defence is set up. "As to what is read in Optatus, that Peter, because he was head of the apostles, was called Cephass, I have said elsewhere," observes Balduinus, "that it is the salæcism of a man dreaming, that the Syriac term which signifies a 'rock,' is the Greek κεφαλῇ, which signifies 'head.' But I suspect that these words, 'wherefore he was called Cephass,' belonged to some foolish comment written unguardedly on the margin, and thence by copiers inserted in the text."

Thus, it is confessed, that two expressions in the passage from Optatus—the one preceding, the other following those words on which the Irish Gentleman places so much reliance—were not written by the author to whom they were imputed. Upon what testimony, then, is the intermediate portion to be received? It would, I am quite ready to admit, be unjust to argue from one, or even several inaccuracies, such as are noticed, that the entire text of the writer is corrupt; but surely it is most unreasonable to adduce the very passage in which two interpolations are of necessity acknowledged, for the purpose of obtaining high authority in favour of a disputed doctrine. To say,—a sentence has been interpolated—therefore the works of Optatus should be altogether rejected,—would be rash and unwarrantable; but it is certainly not much more reasonable to argue thus—he could not have written a clause which betrays gross ignorance—he could not have written a clause which is evidently untrue; but between these two spurious expressions there is a passage which promotes an object which I have at heart, therefore I will insist that the testimony it bears is not disparaged by the circumstances of falsehood by which it is attended

also given. In the preface, Philippus Priorius acknowledges the gross corruption of the text, and excuses himself only by alleging the extreme penury of good copies.

and encompassed; and thus, by the simple process of declaring spurious whatever would invalidate my argument, and pronouncing genuine whatsoever I find it expedient to adopt, I shall have established the validity of evidence offered in the name of Optatus, as to the supremacy of the Church of Rome.

Had the passage, ascribed to Optatus respecting Rome and the Roman Bishops, been conformable to the principle on which his argument against the Donatists has been founded, I should not have insisted on its evident and acknowledged spuriousness. I should have thought it unwise and unbecoming to attempt proving a controverted point of doctrine, by a worse than controverted testimony, but would not, for the sake of exposing an adversary's want of judgment, postpone the consideration of matters far more important. But, it happens, that the argument of Optatus lends no aid whatever to the notion that any part of the interpolated passage was of his composition. He upbraids the Donatists with their extreme presumption in thinking that *they alone* constituted a true Church. "That in a part of Africa in the nook of a small region where you are, it may be, amongst us, in the remainder of Africa it cannot be. If you will allow it to be only among yourselves, in the three Pannonias, in Dacia, Mysia Thracia, Achaia, Macedonia, and in all Greece where you are not, it will not be, &c. &c." "And over innumerable islands and provinces which can scarcely be numbered where you are not, it cannot be. Where then is the propriety of the Catholic name, since it is therefore called Catholic because it is rational and universal"—"*rationabilis et ubique diffusa.*"*

In this remonstrance, however the word "*rationabilis*" be rendered, whether as implying that the Church is to be discerned by the reason, or that it is

* Opt. Alb.

subject to rule, it is certain, at least, that no authority is ascribed to the Roman Church, or any dignity claimed for her. Yet, if the belief of Optatus were such as our Traveller imputes to him, what could be more rational than that, instead of enumerating all those provinces he has named, and censuring the pride and uncharitableness which could exclude them from Christian communion—he should at once have named the city and the Church of Rome, and reproached the heretics with their presumptuous separation from it. Surely it is suspicious, and “might give pause” even to a hardy disputant, that the name of Rome, and the claims of honour for the Papal chair are not found where it would be, under one supposition, most natural to expect them, and that where they are met, we meet also expressions which impart a character of forgery to everything with which they are immediately connected.

The passage from Irenæus, as quoted by the Irish Gentleman, is as follows: “We can enumerate those bishops who were appointed by the Apostles and their successors down to ourselves, none of whom taught or even knew the wild opinions of those men (heretics.) However, as it would be tedious to enumerate the whole list of successions, I shall confine myself to that of *Rome, the greatest, and most ancient, and most illustrious Church*, founded by the glorious Apostles Peter and Paul, receiving from them her doctrine which was announced to all men, and *which, through the succession of her bishops, is come down to us*. Thus we confound *all those who, through evil designs, or vain-glory or perverseness, teach what they ought not, for to this Church, on account of its superior headship, every other must have recourse*, that is, the faithful of all countries, in which Church has been preserved the doctrine delivered by the apostles.”*

* Travels, Vol. I. p. 31.

A few words may not perhaps be unseasonable on the concluding paragraph of this Romish version of as cramp a piece of barbarous Latin as ever perplexed a translator.* It *assumes* the "superior headship" of the Church of Rome, and the necessary submission of the faithful of all other Churches as acknowledged, and proposes, as the only point to be proved or ascertained, the doctrine and discipline which were held at Rome, and which all Christians were bound to follow. If this assumption were correct, the name by which Irenæus designated the persons whom he addressed, was very unjustly applied. They were not heretics, but, on the contrary, true children of the pope. They desired only to know what was taught at Rome, and were ready, with all submission to receive it. If this be an absurdity, and if we must confess, that it was against heretics the censures of Irenæus were directed, it follows, that the argument ascribed to him was exceedingly out of place, for he assumes in it, as admitted, the very point which, as a champion of the Roman Church, he was especially called on to defend.

The translation adopted by Protestant divines has no such ill consequences as these attending it. They observe that the word "its," which ascribes the superior headship to the *Church of Rome*, is an interpolation, and that the expression may, with equal justice, be referred to the superiority of the Roman metropolis. They translate, or understand the "having recourse," as not at all implying submission, but, rather, expressing the resort of provincials to the seat of sovereign authority, and they conceive Irenæus to argue, that, inasmuch as the members of all Christian

* Ad hanc enim ecclesiam, propter potio-rem principalitatem, necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam, hoc est eos qui sunt undique fideles in qua semper ab his qui sunt undique conservata est ea quæ est ab Apostolis Traditio.—Adv. Hær.

churches resort to Rome, the seat of power, they become acquainted with the Roman Church, and find that the doctrines of the apostles, as they themselves understand them, are preserved in this common centre of the Christian world. The meaning or scope of the argument thus understood would be,—heretics, coming from all parts of the world, have the power of learning, what is taught at Rome, and of seeing that Roman doctrine corresponds with that of the Church of their own country. This was a high honour conferred on Rome, but it was because of the city, not the Church. If it be said, that the Church, also, was represented as faithful, the praise was the historical testimony of a writer in the second century that it had so long been true, not a prophecy that it should continue true for sixteen hundred years longer. In short, according to this view of the argument, and in some degree according to the view taken of it by Roman Catholics themselves, Irenæus refers to Rome rather that his reasoning may be simple and brief, than because he ascribed to it an authority which he does not attempt to prove, and which he could not assume without rendering his address to “heretics” preposterous.

But upon what grounds is it maintained that Irenæus ever wrote this passage, respecting which there has been so eager contention? At best we have but the version of a translator who appears singularly unsuited for the office he had undertaken. We have portions of the original Greek in which Irenæus wrote, but, for this obscure and barbarous passage, we are dependent altogether on the interpreter. And what an interpreter!—one whose performance is thus described in the dissertation prefixed to the edition of the works of Irenæus published by the Benedictine, Rhenatus Massuet. “The style is barbarous, slovenly, and rugged, abounding in solæcisms, and in many places expressing imperfectly or altogether

incorrectly (aut male omnino) the sentiments of the author." It had been proposed as a question whether the translation might not have been the work of the author himself. Against the supposition, the editor, (a Benedictine, be it remembered) indignantly protests, insisting that Irenæus knew his own meaning, which, it was quite evident the translator did not, and instancing *the very passage by which the Irish Gentleman proves papal supremacy*, as containing proof that the translator, (on whose sole testimony its authority depends) could not have executed his duty faithfully; inasmuch as, if the translation were correct, the original contained very gross falsehood.* What must the cause be which can set such attainted championship in the fore front of its defences.

But the cause which does not reject the suspicious alliance of Jerome's testimony, can assert small title to the praise of selection. Jerome, to whose explanation of Scriptural difficulties, Damasus, bishop of Rome, appears to have yielded almost implicit assent, whom, indeed, he courted with many flatteries to favour him with biblical instruction, affirming "that nothing could be a more worthy subject of correspondence between them," provided it were so arranged that the bishop should be the disciple, the presbyter his instructor, "that I interrogate, you reply."† Jerome, of whom, the author of his life, contained in the Benedictine edition of his works, affirms, that he was "the mouth of Damasus,"‡ this Jerome who was

* "If it be applied to time it will be most false." "Wherefore I scarcely doubt that Irenæus wrote, in Greek, 'most eminent,' which the interpreter falsely translated *most ancient* omnium antiquissimæ quod si ad foundationes temporis referatur, *falsissimum* erit, &c. &c. Quare vix dubito quin Græce scripserit Irenæus ἀρχαιοτάτης quod male verterit interpreter, antiquissimæ, cum vertendum hic fuisset præcipuæ ac principis. Iren. Dissertat præv. Paris 1710.

† Hier. Par. 1699.

‡ Ibid. Vol. V.

as little disposed to be parsimonious in giving praise, as he is well known to have been ruthless in censure, addressed an epistle to his patron pupil, in which he eulogises the Roman Church, under circumstances about as favourable to disinterestedness as those in which a prime minister may be heard praising the king's speech; and, such is the dearth of testimony in favour of the papal power, that eulogy, even thus obtained, has been put in requisition.

The most extraordinary part, however, of this humiliating procedure is, that the quotation from Jerome, notwithstanding its complimentary form, is actually unfavourable to the doctrine of the papal supremacy. The original text, of which the Irish Gentleman has presented to his readers, rather a graceful than a correct interpretation, is as follows: "Ego nullum primum nisi Christum sequens, Beatitudini tuæ, id est Cathedræ Petri communione *consocior*, super illam petram œdificatam Ecclesiam scio." Here Jerome professes that he follows none but Christ, that he is in communion with the Church of Rome, and that the Church has been built upon that Rock which Peter had the honour, before any of the other apostles, to name. Surely there is nothing here which favours the doctrine of the papal supremacy. Still less does it find favour from the epistle, taken generally, out of which the expression in the Travels has been selected. It commences with an account of the distractions by which the Eastern Church was afflicted, and assigns these disorders as the reason why Jerome applied himself to the bishop of that Church where he had been a presbyter, and asserted his unbroken communion with it. Indeed, it is scarcely possible not to see that he maintained his respect for the Western Church, because he approved of its doctrines, not because he submitted blindly to its authority. Quoniam vetusto Oriens, &c. Domini tunicam, &c. discepsit; *ideo* mihi cathedram Petri et fidem Apostolico

ore laudatám *censui* consulendam. Had he found true doctrine in the East, it seems evident, he would not have thought it necessary to consult the Western Churches; but he had been convinced, that error abounded in one part of the Christian world, and that in another part, sound doctrine prevailed, and this he learned not from the teaching or the decrees of those whose "infallibility" *he had bestowed*, or from the violence of the party whose persecution he had endured, but from the study of God's written word and by the exercise of private judgment.

I really and truly feel fatigued as I look upon the mass of papers yet untouched in my desk, and pregnant with matter for this most tedious controversy. I am sure the reader will rejoice to be spared the weariness of perusing them; and this indulgence, I can with a safe conscience afford, inasmuch as the sole remaining quotation to which our Traveller could have attached any weight, is that which he has extracted from the "blessed Cyprian," whose disregard of Scripture, it will be remembered, Jerome has mildly noticed. Yet, whether from his knowledge of the divine word, or because of the notoriety of Catholic doctrine, he was prevented from lending himself to the advocacy of papal power. Against this, he guards, even in the passage which the Irish Gentleman has cited from his writings; in which, expressing his belief that the primacy was given to Peter, he shows that it was a primacy of name not of authority, affirming that "the other apostles were, like Peter, invested with *an equal participation of honour and power*."* It is unnecessary to prove by various passages from the writings of this eminent Father, that he was most careful and resolute to maintain the independence of his own See, and to resist and condemn all approaches towards such a

* Travels, Vol. I. p. 53.

power as the "Vicar of Christ," claims and would exercise. The portion of his writings which was most favourable to such a claim could furnish nothing better than a testimony which, as clearly as words could express anticipatory denial, gave it a decided contradiction.

CHAPTER XIII.

Infallibility—Abuse of Freedom—Valentinians—Rationalists—Infallible Guide not ascertained—Bellarmine—Augustine—Canonical Books of Scripture—Jerome—Council of Trent.

It is unnecessary to quote the argument, by which the Irish Gentleman infers the necessity of an unerring guide and implicit submission to his dictates, from the abuses of freedom. In this part of his subject, he walks with so observant a docility in the track of his predecessors, that, to examine his arguments in detail would be to weary the reader and to waste time and space which may be, I trust, much better employed.

The argument in proof of infallibility, because of the necessity of an unerring guide, is not in the slightest degree disguised or dignified by the manner in which our Traveller has represented it. The same servile spirit which speaks in the reasonings of the humblest and least educated in his Church, appears to have been the Irish Gentleman's prompter. Every slander which he could gather from every source, he has not scrupled to advance against the men who dared to think that they were responsible for the gifts with which God had blessed them, and that they could no more confide to another, the task of think-

ing for them, than they could imitate that easy prince whom the Church of Rome delights to honour, because he embraced her creed and renounced Protestantism, among whose teachers he could find none to equal the liberality of his Jesuit friend, who agreed, if the Royal votary failed of obtaining heaven in "the Church of Rome, that he would suffer damnation in his stead."*

It happens, however, that in "the *Travels*" the argument for infallibility, is a little too conclusive. Part of the second volume is occupied by a recital of the evils which have afflicted Modern Europe, springing out of that baleful right of judgment which men who think none infallible but God, have felt it their duty to exercise. All their errors in speculation and practice are traced to this "obstinate rationality" in which they would be free, and their impiety is held out as a warning to all, that they should eschew the perilous privilege of free thought, and embrace that protected and patient slavery to which the danger of thinking is unknown; that they should recoil from the evils which the Reformation has produced, and take shelter in the bosom of a Church to which reformation is unwelcome.

It is, however, an inconsistency, which even in a writer so regardless of reason as the Irish Gentleman, occasions some little surprise, that the first volume of "the *Travels*" contains a mournful picture of heresies which disfigured the early ages of the Church, as his second exhibits of those which have sprung from the Reformation. How is this to be explained, so as not to weaken the argument for infallibility and against private judgment? When the various tribes of Gnostics flourished—when Valentinians, and Marcionites, and Manichæans, and all the swarms of the blasphemers of old, abused Scripture and belied tra-

* Fifty Reasons, &c.

dition, and made reason subservient to most frantic superstitions, had the dogma of infallibility been universally received? Was the exercise of private judgment universally prohibited? If such doctrines as Rome holds essential, flourished then in all the vigour of early youth, ministered to, also, as it is confidently asserted, by frequent and glorious miracles, and were yet incapable of controlling the extravagance of the human reason, and were unaffected by the passionate complaint of that Father who mourns over a period of universal heresy,—why shall it be imputed as a vice to the Reformation, that it could not impose on free minds a restraint, by which, in the days of her pride and power, Rome, confessedly could not coerce her slaves. Let the most favourable account which the orthodox have given, of any early heresy, be set up by the side of the angriest representation in which Bousset, or the coarsest of his followers, has reviled Protestant sects, and the modern error will appear so trivial as hardly to be discernible. But indeed the juxta position cannot well be made. There is scarcely a schism of the primitive times, the account of which it would be possible to recite. The accusations are generally of a character which we could not describe; and we must be contented with a general observation, that religious doctrines were never exhibited in wilder extravagance, or the nature of man subdued to deeper degradation, than in many of the heresies which, in the earlier ages of the Church, assailed and strove to corrupt the purity of religion. If such corruptions do not prejudice what is termed the cause of the Church of Rome in its power, why shall the comparatively venial trespasses of modern times be supposed to disparage the Reformation.

But, without paying attention to the fact, that the foulest heresies which history records were those of primitive times, (heresies, by whose side the errors

of later days appear insignificant as the insects of temperate regions seem in comparison with the gigantic reptiles of the tropics;) and without noticing the obvious conclusion, that they contradict the doctrines of modern Rome, proving that the judgment was not fettered in ancient days, or else that the attempt to supersede reason is mischievous, advocates of papal dominion, our Traveller, as well as others, continue to affirm, that, in order to prevent error in doctrine and morals, there must be an unerring tribunal on earth, and man must be submissive to its decision. A few words upon this often repeated allegation may not, perhaps, be altogether unseasonable.

Supposing the Church of Rome infallible in her judgment, it would be well for those whose argument comprehends the notion that, of necessity, she must be so endowed, to inquire what benefits she would then be capable of imparting. The first would, probably, be such an exposition of doctrine as all must understand and confess to be, at the least, authentic. So little care has she had to supply such instruction, that even among the learned it is a matter of doubt how sound doctrine shall be promulgated. Some hold that the pope is infallible, and that whatsoever he solemnly declares, is to be received as truth. Another party insists that a council, when assembled, is, in power, superior to the pope, and that where there is difference, (for such things have been,) the council, even it proceed to the Pontiff's deposition, is to be obeyed. A third sect, who are said to observe the "juste milieu," maintain that popes may err, that councils may err, but that where both have been consenting, truth has been pronounced. Protestants have argued, that such acknowledged diversity of opinion marks out three great sects in the Church of Rome, as broadly distinguished, one from the other, as the most divergent communities of the Reforma-

tion; the believer of one class having for a religion, the bulls, the rescripts, the decreta and decretals, of all who have assumed the tiara and been adored* as

* Let the reader who desires to satisfy himself as to "the adoration of the Pope, consult *Le Tableau de la cour de Rome*," &c. The author of the *Travels* quotes, Vol. I. p. 297, a very indignant remonstrance addressed by Jerome, in reply to a charge of idolatry made by Vigilantius. "We do *not* worship, says the saint. We do *not* adore either the relics of martyrs, or angels, or cherubim or seraphim,—lest we serve the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed for evermore. But we honour the relics of martyrs, that our minds may be raised by *Him* whose martyrs they are. We honour them, that this honour may be referred to *Him* who says, 'He that receiveth you, receiveth me.' " Again he exclaims indignantly, "Thou madman—who ever yet *adored* the martyrs? Who ever yet fancied *that a mortal was a God?*" What is to be said then, for the "adoration of the pope?" Is such a ceremony tantamount to acknowledgment that "our Lord *God* the Pope" was a phrase of deliberate adoption. Infallibility should have prevented such awkwardness. Mr. Charles Butler's explanation is not sufficient. He writes, that "Father Eudæmon Joannes, in his *Apology for Father Garnet*, published in the year 1610, informs us, that he found the word 'Deum' in some editions of the Gloss, 'our Lord God the Pope,' and omitted in others; that he therefore resolved to consult the Zenzolini manuscript, which, he says, might be seen every day, and that he found the real reading was our Lord the Pope." —*Book of the Roman Catholic Church*. An explanation like this seems only to show how little dependance we can place on publications sent forth by the Church of Rome. Although the Church of England has no Congregation of the Index, the printer who mutilated a Scriptural passage by an omission, which, being contrary to the whole tenor of the Bible, could not lead to evil, was punished, and his error was corrected. But, in the infallible Church, with all its apparatus of councils and congregations, a blasphemy is suffered to appear in authorized books; and, although more dangerous, because in accordance with that ceremony, "the adoration of the pope," which seems so signally to reveal "the man of sin," is suffered to remain undefended, unexplained, until Protestant sagacity exposes it.

pope ; another taking as his rule of faith, the canons of councils to which a full attendance of ecclesiastics gave authority, and rejecting papal decrees, if at variance with the declarations to which he yielded assent ; a third, rejecting bulls not sanctioned by a council and councils not approved by a pope, and proposing as his rule of faith what has been delivered at a council,* wherein the pope presided, by delegate or in person. In reply, it is said, that such distinctions are of small account—that the differences do not involve matters of faith, and that Protestants

The papal ceremony is not the only object which the bolt from Jerome's quiver has struck down. It smites also the "Adoration of the Cross," and Dr. Murray's defence of it.

* The estimate in which councils are now held seems to be much higher than that in which they were regarded in earlier times ; Gregory Nazianzum, whose testimony the reader may remember as already quoted by the Irish Gentleman (which establishes the exercise while censuring the abuse of private judgment,) appears to have been as little satisfied with the exercise of infallibility. He says, Ep. ad. Proc. "that he avoids councils because he sees no happy results." The manner in which Bellarmine meets the difficulty of this phrase is too curious and instructive to be omitted. His answer is, "That in the time of Gregory the Great, *the multitude of heretical Bishops made it impossible to hold a lawful council.*" De. Cens. Lib. 2. His explanation of a passage in the works of St. Augustine is not less remarkable. He had said, Lib. De Baptismo, "that former councils may be corrected by those subsequent."

1. *Perhaps* Augustine understands by "former" illegitimate.

2. *Perhaps* he means in "matter of fact," in which Councils may err.

3. *Perhaps* he means in moral precepts which may of course be changed. Here are three *fortasses* called up in defence of infallibility. Why not admit a fourth, and acknowledge it to be, *perhaps*, the opinion of Augustine that infallibility was not bestowed on man, and that, as may be collected from numerous passages in the Father's works, the Scriptures alone, of all books that may be read here on earth, contain truth without any mixture of error.

have no right to cavil, since at all events, each of the three classes will agree, that whatever is to be rejected, the decrees to which the united sanction of pope and council has been given, are of all men to be received. Protestants obstinately rejoin, that such agreement seems without authority. They say, if it had been definitively pronounced how true doctrine was to be authenticated, divisions like these could not exist; that where private judgment is so straitly coerced, if there were a rule to decide the controversy, appeals would surely be made to it; and they ask Roman Catholics what infallible testimony, or even what authoritative decree from pope and council they produce for the location of infallibility? To this question their adversaries have not found it convenient to reply.

Let it be supposed, however, that in the proceedings of a general council over which a pope presides, in person or by his legates, true doctrine is delivered. Where shall we find an accurate report of these important and accredited proceedings? What councils possessed authority to determine matters of faith? In what books are their decisions faithfully recorded? In the creed "of all Roman Catholics," as their prelates described it, the following profession is made—"Likewise all other things delivered, declared, and defined by the sacred canons and general councils, and especially the Holy Synod of Trent, I, without any doubt, receive and profess; and, at the same time, all things contrary thereto, and all heresies condemned, rejected, and anathematized by the Church, I also condemn, reject, and anathematize." It will not be affirmed that the above clause contains any direction whereby the votary can learn the names of the councils whose decrees he has thus solemnly promised to obey. When he expressed his consent "*to admit*" the Scriptures in the sense in which the Church explained them, he knew, at least, what he

was professing, because the books of which it was determined thenceforth the canon of Scripture should consist, had been enumerated; but for the councils, no similar provision was made; and the young Irish Traveller, who has, with so earnest a desire of repose, entered into the harbour of a Church where trouble was never more to reach him, must re-trim his shattered bark, again commence his voyage of discovery, and, with the dread of perjury hanging like a thunder cloud above him, must not suffer his eyes to sleep, or his eyelids to take any rest, until he has discovered the canons and councils which he has solemnly undertaken, without any doubt, to receive and profess.

When, by an exercise of private judgment, the legitimate councils have been discovered, the next difficulty is to procure an authentic copy of their proceedings. The inquirer enters upon this part of his task with the warning of Bellarmine to stimulate his exertions. "Of this matter," he says, "the books of the councils themselves discourse, which, nevertheless, *have been negligently preserved, and abound in many faults*, which must be corrected by reading the ancients,"* &c. When the Council of Trent had determined on its canon of Scripture, it thought proper also to determine what copy should be held authentic,† and pronouncing in favour of the vulgate edition, prohibited any from rejecting it.‡

* Bel. De Cons.

† Conc. Tri. Sess. 4.

‡ This was rather an awkward exercise of infallibility, the anathema lighting where it could not have been designed to fall. That the Canon of Scripture, declared by the Council of Trent, was adjusted less by truth than expediency, it is scarcely necessary to affirm. The inconsistency, however of appending an anathema was rather more apparent than could have been anticipated. It is well known that Jerome regarded as canonical those Scriptures only which Protestants receive, and held a Protestant opinion respecting the Apocryphal books also. "As therefore," he writes, "the Church readeth Judith and Tobit, and the

No such provision has been made for the records of councils; and thus, the inquirer is left altogether to his own judgment and industry to ascertain the sources from which he shall learn the doctrines he has sworn to embrace.

Thus far, it is clear, infallibility has been bestowed to no purpose. It has not pronounced upon the claims of canons and councils to be received, nor has it stamped with a character of authenticity any works from which their enactments may be learned. Much and valuable information may be collected from the evidence of Roman Catholic Bishops, (especially from that of Dr. Murray and Dr. Doyle,) taken before the Parliamentary Committees in the year 1825; and serving to show, that, in the first essays of an inquirer into the doctrines of the Church of Rome, he has no better guidance than that of private judgment.

Books of Maccabees, but does not receive *them among the Canonical Scriptures*, so likewise it may read these two books (the book of Jesus the son of Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon) for the edification of the people, but not as of authority for proving any doctrine of religion." Prefat. in Sal. &c. All these books the Church of Rome accounts canonical, and pronounces accursed whoever shall not submit to her decision. And yet she has canonized Jerome. The bard in Madoc speaks of one who, if he saw his country wronged,

"Would feel a pang in heaven."

This is noble in poetry, but, in plain prose, it is rather intolerant to shoot an anathema so high, and to hope that Jerome shall consent to remain under the curse of the Church of Rome, and in return assist her votaries with the effectual intercession of his prayers.

There are countries wherein living saints and physicians have had the walnut tree proverb applied to them, and been cudgeled into benignity. The Council of Trent is still more unceremonious, and like the Scottish chieftain,

"Will right a wrong where'er 'tis given,
Though *it were in the court of heaven.*"

What, then, is the use of infallibility? It allows, it may be, a choice to be made of instructors who were not infallible, whose writings, supposing them originally pure, are now full of faults, and who may have taught what two parts in three of the unerring Church pronounce to be, not only not infallible, but to be false, and even heretical.

It is a favourite figure of rhetoric with Roman Catholic controversialists, to demand—*can the Bible speak?* and to say, that, if it could perform the miracle of uttering a viva voce answer to their inquiries, they would submit to its authority. They seem to forget, that the decrees of councils are equally mute, although they have sworn, and without any reservation, to receive them. They forget that tradition has not found a voice, and yet they profess most firmly to admit and embrace it. Of what use, then, has mute infallibility been? Members of the Church of Rome profess to receive tradition. This, from its nature, it may be said, could not be committed to writing; but an infallible direction might have been given to the sources from which it was to be received, and to the marks by which it was to be authenticated. No such direction has been afforded. Roman Catholics profess *to admit* Scripture according to the sense in which the Church receives it. The sense in which the Church receives it, she has never condescended to make known. They profess to receive, “without any doubt,” “indubitanter,” the councils and canons. The infallible Church has not dispelled the doubts which render it a matter of difficulty, perhaps it might be said a matter impossible, to ascertain the councils and canons which are the proper objects of the votary’s engagement, and to know with certainty, or even a high degree of probability, what they require of him to believe. What is, then, the benefit derived from this boasted infallibility? Is it not just such a patron as Doctor Johnson has described—“one who

looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help."

And, indeed, even after the first difficulties have been overcome, the help which infallibility offers can be accounted no better than an encumbrance, superadding to the other disadvantages of Romanism a dogma which cannot be defended, and making a boastful profession, of which the blasphemy has not been extenuated by any compensating advantage. Scarcely any members of the Church of Rome will deny, that the necessity of that unerring tribunal of which they boast, arises out of the weakness and the liability to error of the human understanding. Indeed this seems acknowledged in the profession to receive Scripture agreeably to the interpretation of the Church. The defect implied in this declaration must be that in the mind of man, not imperfection in God's holy Word. Accordingly, it follows, that, unless the judgment of every individual were rendered infallible to understand, the gift, by which an unerring Church is supposed to propound true doctrine, has been bestowed in vain. "If," it has been well said, "to preserve the unity of the Church and to prevent schism, this infallibility has been vouchsafed, we ought to expect, that by this means, the unity of the Church *has* been preserved, and schism *has* been prevented. The fact is, that schism has been promoted, and the unity of the Church has been broken by it. Besides, even granting that the decisions of the Church of Rome are infallible, how can men be infallibly certain that they are right in the interpretations they have given? But if any doubt should arise, it may be set at rest by another decision. This other decision is, however, liable to the same objection. And thus, it is within the range of possibility, that one infallible certainty may require to be explained by a series of infallible certainties without end: *that*

*is, that men may be left in total uncertainty upon the subject."**

Thus, as the same writer observes, even supposing that infallibility were lodged in the pope, it would be of little practical advantage. "Even granting that the pope may, by his infallibility, correct mistakes as fast as they occur, how can this exempt his decisions from the liability to be mistaken."† But those who adopt this compendious mode of issuing infallible decisions must embrace also the accompanying inconvenience of defending Bulls and Decretals, whose quarrel it is better not to take up; while, for such as adhere to the safer rule of regarding nothing infallible which has not been decreed by pope and council, an inconvenience of another character, and perhaps of no less magnitude is provided. The difficulties in the way of summoning and collecting a council are too great to admit of the expectation that such assemblages can be frequent; and thus, while the liability to error would be the same, the means of correcting it would be far less attainable.

I fear I have wearied my reader with an argument which may be accounted mere supererogation. The dogma of infallibility scarcely needs to be confuted. Like that race of ancient Eastern kings, whose abiding was in the voluptuous recesses of the palace, not on the throne or the tribunal, and who demanded only to be looked upon in order to be contemned, the profane dogma upon which the monarchy of the Church of Rome relies, withdrawn from the necessities which require its presence, shrined and curtained from vulgar view, may retain respect; but it is scarcely possible, that it can be contemplated steadily in the nineteenth century, without being divested of its fictitious, and it would not be too much to add, blasphemous authority.

* Agency of Divine Providence, &c. p. 200. † Ibid p. 201.

While, therefore, the Church of Rome, claiming the reverence due to infallibility, leaves its votaries in total ignorance where this power resides—what it has done—how its existence is proved; it will be sufficient here to mention something which it has not done. It has not supplied a rule by which apostolic tradition can be distinguished. It has not enumerated the councils and canons to be received, and taught how that which is spurious is to be separated from what is authoritative and true. And, above all, it has suffered eighteen hundred years to elapse without providing an explanation of Scripture, or making it possible for any member of the infallible Church, to read the Bible without incurring a curse; or for many to read it, without the added guilt of perjury.

CHAPTER XIV.

Resemblance between the Church of Rome and the Church of the Fathers—Lights—Incense, &c.—Worship of Relics, &c.—Basil—Origen—Chrysostom.

THE Irish Gentleman pursued his Travels even in dreams, and ascertained to his satisfaction, by the unimpeachable evidence of a vision, that in the early ages of the Church, the ceremonies of public worship differed in no important particular from the Mass of Townsend-street Chapel. By the same convincing testimony, he discovered that the service of the Church of England is different from that of primitive times, and that the angel who conducted Hermas was not acquainted with Luther. The agreements between the present and the past, upon which he most delights to dwell, are very edifying. There were lights in the Churches of ancient times, because

the darkness rendered them necessary. There are lights in Townsend-street Chapel at the present day, when no darkness requires them, but when, by their aid, young gentlemen may "read the touching story of the early Churches." There was incense "in subterranean places" of old, as a "means of dissipating unwholesome odours." Townsend-street Chapel is not a subterranean place, but the incense is not for this omitted. The Irish Gentleman sprinkles his forehead with water, and remembers the time when salt was mixed with it. He is present "when the mysterious sacrifice begins," and remembers when it had a different beginning.* When at Townsend-street Chapel the priest *repeats words*, he remembers when in old times fruits were offered; and when the priest says, "Lift up your hearts," and the people respond to him, "We have lifted them up to the Lord," he remembers St. Cyprian.

According to this enumeration, the Romish Church at the present day resembles the Church of old in using lights and incense, but differs from her in using them unnecessarily—resembles her in the use, differs in the neglect of an expression; and in one instance resembles her in using words which of old time offered first fruits on the altar, and which are still spoken, although they offer fruits no longer. But of all the resemblances, that by which the Irish Gentleman is most deeply affected he finds in the "practice of beating the breast with the clenched hand at the Confiteor, and other parts of the service." The parallel passage to this "crawl-thumping," as the Irish Gentleman tells us the practice is called, he does not give, but contents himself with noticing that St. Augustine said, "if we have not breasts, and, beating them,

* I found myself reminded of the form of words *Foris Catechumeni*, in which invariably, as long as the discipline of the secret continued, &c.—*Travels*, Vol. I. p. 181.

say, 'forgive us our sins,' " &c.* Hence our Traveller infers, that Augustine encouraged the practice

* The Irish Gentleman prefers the testimony of St. Augustine to that of Scripture, else he would have referred to our Lord's parable of the publican. The minute observances of the Pharisee were, perhaps, likely to awaken disagreeable remembrances, and to suggest an inconvenient comparison. The Travels speak of the coarse and contumelious term which has been, the author says, applied in Ireland to this practice of beating the breast. The term is infinitely less general in its use than our Traveller imagines; indeed so unused, that I could undertake to say, I have not for very many years once heard it, and I reside where there is a dense Protestant population, with all classes of whom I have free and confidential intercourse.

Nothing can be more unlike the practice of early times, and of climates not so temperate as ours, than the gentle notices with which, "in the Confiteor," as our Traveller observes, modern Roman Catholics salute their breasts. The "Confiteor" is a formulary, in which they confess to God, and to the blessed Mary, and to the holy St. Michael, &c. &c. &c. that they have sinned. When the enumeration of the more honoured saints has been completed, and provision made, by a comprehensive sentence, for all who have not been specially named, the expression "through my fault" is repeated, and the right hand moves to the breast—again the same expression, and the corresponding gesture, a third time, and with as little of passion or solemnity as attends the idlest ceremonial, the parting blow is given. Here the Irish Gentleman might have found difference as well as resemblance—the resemblance being peculiar to no sect or class; the difference one which his Church may claim as all her own. When consciousness of sin and a feeling of penitence has strongly affected man, to beat upon his breast is a natural expression of passion, which may be employed by all, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, whether publicans in the temple or Fathers in the Church, whose emotions are powerful, and whose habits and natures are demonstrative. No man, whatever his own habits and character may be, can look on such an act, performed in the spirit and feeling which suggests it, with any other feeling than of respect. But where it has become a mere form—where not the heart but the breast—or, to use our Traveller's citation, the "craw" is

not more by precept than example, and concludes that the saint and the worshippers in Townsend-street Chapel beat in unison.

Is not this rather childish? If it were desirable to compare the religious service now in use with that of the early ages, would it not be far better to consult the writings of primitive times for the forms of worship then observed, than to seek them in the visions of distempered slumber? It really is not quite candid, in one who had read Justin Martyr's apology, (and who had quoted from his description of Christian worship on the Sabbath-day, a passage which appeared to serve his purpose,) to forget in sleep what the context had taught him, and substitute a very frivolous and visionary description in place of a communication sober and full of importance.*

thought of and thumped—the resemblance to a practice which, in some characters, springs out of true feeling, is the grimace of monkeys aping what they cannot feel or understand, rather than a gesture performed in a spirit and feeling which confer dignity on it, and associate it with the external acts of many pious men in all ages, in their *solitary devotions*. In a word, for the gestures which the energy of penitence may prompt, a resemblance can be found in ancient days; for the “craw thumping” ceremony of the “Confiteor” our Traveller has found neither likeness nor countenance.

* “On the day, as it is called, of the sun, there is an assemblage at the same place of those who live in the country and in town, and the commentaries of the apostles, or the writings of the prophets are read at convenient length. Then when the reader ceases, the presbyter or bishop (πρεσβυτέρω) delivers a discourse in which he exhorts the people to the imitation of what is good. After this we all rise and pour forth our supplications, and, as I have said, when the prayers are ended, bread and wine and water are offered, and the presbyter, in like manner, offers the thanksgiving to his best ability (ὅσην δύναμις αὐτῷ), and the people assent, saying Amen. And a distribution and participation is made to each of those things which have been blessed, and to those not present they are sent by the deacons. Like-

The Irish Gentleman appears highly scandalized at the trivial subjects of contention between the Church of England and the Dissenters, and yet the nature of the topics on which he has himself been pleased to dwell, might well have taught him, that it is the mind which gives consequence to the objects which it notices, and that what to one man may appear a very small thing, shall to another have a character such as compels him to respect it. The importance which the Irish Gentleman attached to his resemblances need not be described. He carefully sought them out—he meditated upon them—he dreamed of them,—and yet the things which were of such moment to him, appeared so insignificant to the apologist Martyr, that, in his account of the Sabbath service, he has not even noticed them. What has *he* recorded? The reading of the Holy Scriptures, so as that all may learn—the prayer in which all may join—the exhortation by which the assembly

wise, those who are more wealthy and are willing, each at his own discretion gives what he will, and what is thus collected is confided to the presbyter, whence he assists orphans and widows, and such as from sickness or any other cause are in need, those who are in bond, or strangers sojourning; in a word, he is the guardian of all in necessity.”—Apol. Lib. 2. Paris, 1636. p. 98.

An expression in the above passage has been supposed to favour the notion that, in the time of Justin Martyr, there were no written liturgies. The inference is by no means just. Indeed the opposite conclusion would be the more natural, as one can scarcely be supposed to employ all his power on an address or a prayer which he might have previously prepared, but for which he trusts to the moment of delivery. At a very early age, we find it characteristic of Christianity that in the different Churches, forms of prayer were used, in all of which there was substantial agreement notwithstanding some unimportant differences, and the fact, that in each instance, *the prayers were the best that could be framed* does not certainly involve the inference that they were *consequently extemporaneous*.

may be animated, and the eucharist in which the faith of all may be strengthened. These things the Traveller has not thought worthy of notice; the lights, and incense, and sprinklings, and gesticulations, have not been described by the Martyr. The omissions and the observances in both cases, are highly characteristic.

There must be many Roman Catholics to whom the defence set up for them by their Irish advocate will occasion deep mortification. Of their doctrines, he has no care but to find some writer of antiquity to whom they may plausibly be imputed; for their discipline, his sole apology is that it was observed in ancient churches; and yet, in the parallel he professed to institute, everything which could interest or edify in the worship of primitive times, is carefully omitted. Is this a tacit admission that with such observances, the Rites of the Church he would defend, have no similitude. Is all that could touch the heart and enlighten the understanding and build up faith and morals denied to popery, and can she resemble the ancient Church by such contrivances, only, as those in which compulsory converts from paganism were said to cover the idolatry which they cherished still, under an external of Christian forms?*

In ancient days the minister, in a language which the people understood, read the Scriptures for their instruction. To-day, in a language which they do not understand, the priest reads the Romish Missal. Ancient assemblies were rich in the incense of pious prayer; a reasonable service. Townsend-street

* "The Churches were filled with the increasing multitude of these unworthy proselytes, who had conformed, from temporal motives, to the reigning religion; and whilst they devoutly imitated the postures, and recited the prayers of the faithful, they satisfied their consciences by the silent and sincere invocation of the Gods of antiquity."—*Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, c. 28.

Chapel is contented with the less spiritual odours of burning censers. In the assemblies of old times, the Gospel was preached and hearts were converted; now bells are vehemently tingled, and whether hearts be opened or not, breasts are knocked at. In ancient days, prayer and charity were inseparably united. Now the prayer is such that it may issue from a heart where malice dwells, and that it often deepens into ungodly and merciless imprecation.* In ancient times, there were lights of human contrivance when the light of heaven was denied, and unwholesome vapours in caverns and tombs were dissipated by the smoke of incense. Now the splendour of the noon day sun is affronted with the sullen and sulky flames of unnecessary tapers, and the pure atmosphere of the upper world is loaded with fumes for which no necessity is pleaded; the light and the censer being accounted better memorials of elder time than the truth of God's word, and the piety of pure worshippers;† or, as if, under irresistible constraint, in

* "Anathema Omnibus Hæreticis."

† The Irish Gentleman does not explain the ceremonies of his Church, as they were interpreted by earlier and more authoritative expositors. "In the use of lights and incense; a practice sneered at by the Protestant as pagan, I *but* read the touching story of the early Church, when her children hunted by the persecutor, held their religious meetings either at night or in subterranean places, whose gloom, of course, rendered the light of tapers necessary, and where the fumes of the censor, besides being familiar to the people among whom Christianity first sprung, were resorted to as a means of dissipating unwholesome odours," *Travels*, Vol. 1. p. 180. The approved exposition of lights and censers, is very different. "The two candles precede the Gospel, because the law and the prophets which predicted the Gospel came before it. The two candlesticks are the two precepts of charity which are recommended in the Gospel. The two acolytes who bear them are Moses and Elias, between whom the Lord shone as the sun, in the mountain. Whilst the Gospel is read the wax lights are

these superfluous observances, confession is made that, where popery is, there is night, and that influences more unfriendly to life than the pestilent vapours of the Charnel-house or the mine, are in her "chambers of imagery."

It was said by one who knew neither the Church nor the country of which he spoke, that "popery was good enough for Ireland." A time will surely come, when Ireland shall have taught scorers to speak of her in more respectful language, but it is not from such apologies as those of the Traveller advocate, that good lesson is to be learned. He has assigned to the Church for which he pleads a place, which her most contumelious revilers would contemptuously have appointed her, wherein the pious

deposited on the floor, because the shadows of the law and the enigmas of the prophets, are revealed to the humble by the light of the Gospel. When the Gospel has been read, the candles are extinguished, whilst they are understood spiritually through the light of the Gospel." *Bibliotheca Patr.* Vol. 10. Protestant Churches think the reading of the Bible in a language understood by the people more conducive to knowledge than the lighting or extinguishing wax candles, or even setting them on the ground. "The censor is carried before the Gospel, because Christ is declared sacrificed for us a sweet odour in the fire of the passion." "For the censor signifies the Lord's body; when burning his divinity; the fire the holy spirit. If the censor be golden, it denotes the Lord's divinity excelling all things; if silver, his humanity adorned with all holiness; if copper, it declares his flesh broken for us; if iron, it insinuates his flesh dead; conquering death in the Resurrection." *Bibliotheca Patrum.*

Was the Irish Gentleman ashamed of foolery like this? Has he exercised the forbidden right of private judgment and taken upon him to be his own interpreter? In truth he has not mended matters. In the approved version, the enigma of the wax candles and the censor, however absurdly and clumsily, were yet piously meant to be remembrances of Christ. To our traveller, they recall no memories but those of the charnel-house.

observances by which the primitive Church made her character and her usefulness known, are not found, and where practices attributed to her, but which in her own person or in the testimony of approved expositors, she never condescended to notice, are most ostentatiously paraded. He has claimed for the Romish Church alliance with primitive Christianity, (a relation of dependance confessed, with laudable humility, by a contrite suppliant to the Lord, but utterly disgraceful to the Irish Gentleman's cause,) entitling her not to sit at meat and share in council, to participate in what is edifying and holy, but to receive and be contented with what had been rejected or unregarded; the dependance of "dogs" who "feed on the crumbs that fall from their master's table." Indeed it is not unfair to affirm, that according to the Irish Gentleman's report, the treasures of Christian antiquity have been divided, and that the Church of England has been contented to receive those possessions of which God's word allowed, relinquishing all the glitter of "attractive paganism," to her more gaudy-minded rival.

But, as may also be collected from the *Travels*, it is doing injustice to the Church of Rome, to think her paganism confined to the practice of lighting torches in the day, (a practice indeed not held, in pagan times, very characteristic of sobriety,) or to the worship of which smoke is so essential an ingredient, or the sprinkling of mingled salt and water. There are proofs more important even than these, that the genius of ancient Rome has returned to her habitation. The *Travels* contain a list of "popish abominations,"* (Abominations is the word; *Quid vetat ridentem*) in which certain doctrines of the Church of Rome are plainly described, and for which a jus-

* *Travels*, Vol. I. p. 47. Title of Chapter vii.

tification is sought in testimonies taken from early Christian and modern infidel writers.* It would be

† “It is by those, indeed, who are not in communion with either of the contending parties, that the question between them has the best chance of being disinterestedly decided; and, on this principle, the testimony of Gibbon may be thrown into the same scale as that of Socinus; the infidel, no less than the heresiarch having professed his inability to withstand the weight of historical evidence that, within the first four or five centuries of Christianity, most of the leading doctrines of popery were already introduced, in theory and in practice.”—*Travels*, Vol. II. p. 51.

The Irish Gentleman finds the testimony of Gibbon serviceable and recommends it, ascribing to its author that “impartial indifference” for which he had himself taken credit. If there were no such standard as the Bible, and religions were like rival arts, they might appeal to the judgment of an infidel, according to the principle on which a blind man was appointed to decide between statuary and painting. Having a law and a testimony, Protestants cannot betake themselves to a less august tribunal. At the same time, they may avail themselves of the Irish Gentleman’s concession, and say to him that his chosen umpire, Gibbon, has pronounced in their favour. True, he testifies that many or most leading doctrines of popery had been introduced before the end of the fifth century, but with no less distinctness affirms that they were not known in the first. With equal plainness he pronounces them corruptions of the religion taught by Christ and his apostles, and even calls up a vision such as that of the young Traveller, but for the purpose of exhibiting in very vivid colours, the adulterations which Christian doctrine had undergone by its dalliance with heathenism. It may form a good sequel to the Irish gentleman’s dream of religion in the third century.

“The imagination, which had been raised by a painful effort to the contemplation and worship of the universal cause, eagerly embraced such inferior objects of adoration, as were more proportioned to its gross conceptions and imperfect faculties. The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christians was gradually corrupted; and the monarchy of heaven, already clouded by metaphysical subtleties, was degraded by the introduction of a popular

a very unnecessary and no doubt unacceptable labour, to pay these "Abominations" the compliment of a formal review, but a brief moment may not be misapplied in glancing at the species of proof, on which a defender of the Church of Rome, is contented to rest her pretensions.

1. *Image worship*.—Tertullian says that the image of Christ was *painted* on the sacramental cup. St. Clement of Alexandria, also, "recommended to Christians to wear the figure of a *fish** engraven on their rings."—We may leave image worship with its defender.

2. *Worship of relics*.—The citations are more numerous. One I select because it sets the doctrine respecting this "abomination" in a fuller light than is usually thought becoming. "Basil.—If any one suffer for the name of Christ, his remains are deemed

mythology, which tended to restore the reign of polytheism.

As the objects of religion were gradually reduced to the standard of the imagination, the rites and ceremonies were introduced that seemed most powerfully to affect the senses of the vulgar. If, in the beginning of the fifth century, Tertullian, or Iactantius, had been suddenly raised from the dead, to assist at the festival of some popular saint, or martyr; they would have gazed with astonishment and indignation, on the *profane spectacle*, which had succeeded to the pure and spiritual worship of a Christian congregation. As soon as the doors of the church were thrown open, they must have been offended *by the smoke of incense*, the perfume of flowers, and *the glare of lamps and tapers*, which diffused, *at noon-day, a gaudy, superfluous, and in their opinion, a sacrilegious light*. If they approached the balustrade of the altar, they made their way through the prostrate crowd, consisting for the most part of strangers and pilgrims, who resorted to the city on the vigil of the feast; and who already felt the intoxication of fanaticism, and, perhaps, of wine.—*Decline and Fall*, 628.

* The Greek word contained initials representing our Saviour's name and office. *Travels*, Vol. I. pp. 44, 303.

precious ; and if *any one* touch the bones of a martyr, he becomes partaker in some degree of his holiness, on account of the grace residing in them. Wherefore precious in the sight of God is the death of his saints. Serm. in Psalm cxv." Travels, Vol. I. p. 60. The doctrine, we may infer, of the Church of Rome is in unison with this superstition, "*Any one* who touches the bones of a martyr becomes partaker of his holiness." I was of opinion that the privilege of the well-known burying ground in the county of Wicklow was not formally and fully recognized, and when I heard of the eager contentions of rival processions, because each grave could insure heaven to no more than seven inhabitants, the eighth, perhaps, not touching the bones of the buried martyr, I fondly thought, that the strife which often gave companions to the departed friend, sprung out of the superstitions of an uninstructed people, not from the acknowledged tenets of their Church. Now the doctrine is avowed. Justly Rome holds the apostles and evangelists in disesteem. *They* gave to the world their dangerous books, when they took away a far surer and more compendious mode of salvation, in burying the first martyr's body. Narrowly, no doubt, the canonized Ignatius escaped excommunication. Had the deacons, who accompanied him, been as uncharitable as he, it would not be proper to say where his criminal prayers and the censure of an offended Church would have conveyed him. So the doctrine of the Church is, that *any one* who touches the bones of a martyr becomes partaker of his sanctity.

"It is the bright day that brings forth the adder."

The time is not long passed, since to impute to the Church of Rome doctrines such as her advocate challenges old authority to brand upon her, would provoke a pause of silent indignation from her chil-

dren, or most vehement protestations against the cruel and calumnious misrepresentation. A change has come, and the advocate of the Irish people and the Church of Rome makes it his boast, that they believe and she teaches most profane and disgusting superstitions. But Basil was no less superstitious? The relic worship of the Church of Rome would never perhaps have been confessed, if the precedent of the Saint's example could not be pleaded in its favour. It is not upon the practices of modern times censure should fall. The Irish Gentleman, if in error, is wrong with a light of the early Church, and, for his companion's sake, he should be pardoned.

I wish it were as easy to free Basil from all charge of superstition as it is to exculpate him from our young Traveller's unguarded accusation. Indeed it is rather strange, that the editor who corrected his friend's error in falsely ascribing to that Father, the passage immediately following the extract I have transcribed, did not take the trouble to tell him that here also his citation was unfaithful. Every one who has had opportunity to examine editions of Basil's works has, of course, seen that the reference appended to the citation, bears testimony against it. It is extracted professedly from his sermon on the cxvth Psalm, *and no such sermon is to be found*. The reader may, perhaps, imagine that by this evasive reference the Irish Gentleman wished to give an air of ridicule to his entire performance, and to insinuate that superstitious tenets are ascribed to the ancient worthies of the Church as one might impute profligacy to Mr. Wilberforce, or inconsistency and want of public principle to Lord Farnham* or Sir Robert

* The name of this distinguished nobleman has been associated by the author of the Travels with the events of what has been called the second Reformation in Ireland. The conduct which an imperious sense of duty constrained his lordship to observe upon that memorable occasion was

Harry Inglis. It is not so ; our Traveller has been deceived, and has quoted the expressions from Basil as if they should really have been ascribed to him. The facts I apprehend to have been, that the passage, recited in " the Travels," was found in a work which a certain Simon Metaphrastes professed to have compiled from the discourses of Basil—that the scribe who contracted to supply extracts for the defence of the Irish faith, thinking the worker in Mosaic not so creditable an authority as the saint whose opinion he was bound to furnish, having seen in the margin of the scrap sermon a reference which he hastily transcribed, appended it to his extract without further inquiry, for the vindication of the Father's fame, and the exposure of the young Irishman's imprudence. There is no doubt a Homily on the cxvth

such as can never cause him to feel pain. When the history of the "second Reformation" can be written, it will record events and circumstances which demonstrated the weakness of the Church of Rome, and betrayed the nature of the influences on which she is dependent for her seeming authority,—“signs of the times,” which were not discerned. The Cavan conversions are spoken of with ridicule by the superficial as well as by those who have been too successful in misdirecting public opinion. Still they cannot sneer away the fact that in the space of a few weeks more than 500 persons in one parish renounced the errors of the Church of Rome, that more than five hundred remained faithful to their professions, and that in not a single instance has a conversion been accounted for as effected by pecuniary considerations. But it is asked, why are there no more conversions—the current had set in favourably—why has it ceased to flow ? The answer belongs rather to politics than to religious controversy—this is not the place for it. But thus much may be said. Popery is unsound at its heart's core. In its disordered bulk, there is a principle which once might have come out in healthy Protestantism, which now, it is to be feared, has taken the character of infidelity. The prospects of the infallible Church will soon be ascertained. The humours which are drawn to the surface are not the most dangerous.

Psalm, in an edition of Basil's works, but the title under which it is found, does not prove commendatory, being as follows: "Appendix to the first volume of the Works of Basil the Great, containing certain works *falsely ascribed to him*."*—No more on the worship of relics.

3. Invocation of Saints.—On this subject, the Travels contain nothing of great moment as testimony, but much instruction as to the art of preparing evidence for a particular occasion. For example, Hilary is made to say, "According to Raphael, speaking to Tobias, there are angels who serve before the face of God, and who convey to him the prayers of the suppliant. It is not the character of the Deity that stands in need of this intercession, but our infirmity does." From the passage, as it is thus read, and the heading of the section in which it is found, three things might rationally be inferred. 1st, That the Book of Tobit was to be accounted *as authority*. 2dly, That saints intercede for us. 3dly, That we are justified in invoking them. But, between the words "suppliant" and "It," a sentence occurs in the original of which we might say that it is "necessary for the better understanding." It is as follows: "This is said, that if we wished to account them (angels) to be the eyes, or the ears, or the hands, or the feet of God, we may have the authority of no improbable intelligence." The infirmity to be aided is the weakness of our imagination—the intercession is not supplication—the Book of Tobit has the authority of no improbable intelligence, and the invocation of saints is warranted and recommended to such and such only as suppose eyes, and hands, and ears, and feet, to have consciousness

* Appendix Tomi Primi Operum Basilei Magni complectens opera quædam ei falso adscripta.—Benedictine Edition. Paris, 1730.

and will, distinct from that of the Being to whom they belong, and who make it their practice, because they fear to address a superior here in earth, to breathe their silent supplications to his foot, and think such a mode of petitioning the most likely to be successful. Origen is quoted in favour of invocation also, and two passages are adduced from him with which I mean to conclude this subject. One is from his Commentary on the Canticles. "We may be allowed to say of all the holy men who have quitted this life, retaining their charity towards those whom they left behind, that they are anxious for their salvation, and that they assist them by their prayers, and their meditation with God." For it is written in the Books of the Maccabees, "This is Jeremiah the prophet of God, who always prays for the people." Lib. 3, in Can. Cant.* The above is taken from a work, of which I have been able to find no more than a Latin translation. The extract is not very correctly given. The words imputed to Origen are to the effect, that if we say the Saints, &c. "*it will not be inconvenient,*" ascribing no higher authority to the Apocryphal Scripture. And these are passages adduced to countenance the profession of faith, "that the Saints, reigning together with Christ, are to be venerated and invoked, and that they offer prayers," &c. &c.; and also to the denunciation, that whoso does not make this profession, cannot be saved. The Fathers claim, on behalf of weak human nature, that if the Saints be imagined to take a continued interest in the world they have left, the imagination may be permitted; but the Church of Rome says, if you have not such a belief, and do not add to it an invocation which divides Christ's honour, you cannot be saved.

But there is a passage from Origen, in which he

* Travels, Vol. I. p. 57.

directly invokes the Saints. "I will fall down on my knees, and, *not presuming, on account of my crimes, to present my prayer to God, I will invoke all the Saints to my assistance; and ye Saints,*" &c.—Lib. 2. de. Job.* Is not this invocation? Yes; but not of Origen. The three books on Job are not Origen's. They are published with his works by the Benedictine Editors, but published as the writings of one whose name is not known, and who certainly was not Origen.†

On this subject it is unnecessary to add more than one sentence. To believe that those departed in the faith and fear of God are interested in the welfare of human beings, sharing in the joy that is felt over one sinner that repenteth, is altogether different from a belief that it is right to pray to any but God.

4. Prayers for the Dead.—In the citations to prove this practice, nothing is more remarkable than the want of success in discovering some support for the doctrine of Purgatory. Indeed the first quotation, that of Cyril, terminates just at the point where an expression occurs, which proves decisively that the doctrine of a purgatory could not then have been received. "I wish to persuade you by an example; for I know that *many say, how is the soul profited,* when having departed from this world with sin or without." Here was an occasion on which, if purgatory were the doctrine of the times, the answer was ready. Indeed, were such a doctrine held, the doubt could not have arisen.‡

* Travels, Vol. I. p. 58. † Orig. Ben. 1733.

‡ The Church of England has pronounced no other judgment on the custom of prayer for the dead than the tacit censure of excluding such prayers from the liturgy. She found no warrant for them in God's Word, and knew that there was a strong tendency towards them in man's nature; but seeing how they led towards that doctrine from which eventually sprang so much encouragement to vice and irre-

I shall add here but a 5th “abomination,”—Auricular Confession. Even Voltaire is enumerated among the authorities by whom this practice has been approved. I have no doubt, that, under due regulations, and as disclosures are frequently made to the minister in Protestant communions, the practice may be useful; but I have an insuperable objection to the theory of confession in the Church of Rome. The priests are to become casuists—they must read to be instructed, and the works in which information is to be acquired, are such as demand much castigation. Indeed, if the advocates of Protestant principle could imitate the profligate example which has been set them, and, regardless of public morals, would give parents and husbands an opportunity of seeing through what unutterable pollutions preparation may be made for the confessional, doubts would soon arise, whether, to one class of individuals at least, there was not more of danger than of advantage to be expected from penitential communications.

I would not be supposed to insinuate that “the Fathers are pure from objectionable doctrine, or even from that paganism by which the literature of their times had been influenced.* When it is made a

ligion, she afforded no encouragement to a practice which may or may not be convenient, but for which Scripture cannot be pleaded, and which has been abused to very evil purposes.

* I do not think an ingenious and industrious man could be at any loss to find in the eloquence of modern orators, whose Christianity has never been called in question, expressions as strong and as seemingly favourable to Popery as any genuine passage adduced from the early Fathers in defence of “the Abominations.” That Chrysostom and Basil, and indeed one might say generally, the preachers of primitive times, did not subdue their fancies, and adjust their expressions according to the exact rules of a severe logic, should not be denied, and that, in speaking of the memorials of the dead and the glorious “hierarchy of hea-

boast, that at an early period religion stooped to attract the Heathen, by an assumption, not less than meretricious, of pagan rites and ceremonies, it is not difficult to infer disastrous consequences. It was an unnatural alliance, and one in which all that was weak and passionate in human nature lent assistance to the principle of evil. The unhappy results to religion—at least the religion of Rome—have been permanent.

Non equitem dorso, non frænum depulit ore.

It is a bad defence to make for the paganism of modern Rome, that there were individuals more than a thousand years since, who also held erroneous opinions.

Nil agit exemplum quod litem lite resolvit.

When we ask, why do you worship images, it is no answer to say that Clement of Alexandria recom-

ven," they did not suppress emotions by which the sympathies of the congregation could be awakened, was no more than nature would teach us to expect. The necessary consequence was, that the discourses of the Fathers are not free from the common fate of almost all oratory which aptly addressed to an excited audience, has something of exaggeration and extravagance to an unimpassioned reader. "A friendly eye should never see such faults." I do not hesitate to affirm, that the sermons of the late Robert Hall, whose Protestantism no man will question, contain passages as much to the purpose of the Irish Gentleman as those which have been honoured by his selection. We do not take the eloquence of that distinguished individual for more than he intended it. Ought we before the time, take account of "every idle word," which may have been spoken by orators of no less excitable temperament, and exposed too, to the added temptations of that matchless and seductive language of which it has been finely said, "that it gives a soul to the objects of sense, and a body to the abstractions of philosophy."

mended the fashion of setting the figure of a fish in rings. Why do you burn torches in the day? Because the ancients burned them at night. Why pollute pure air with the smoke of censers? Because the ancients used incense where the air was bad. Why do you say, that if a man do not believe in a purgatory, he must be damned? Because there were men in old times who thought that it *was permitted* to pray for the dead. Why cannot they be saved, who do not believe that dead men should be addressed in prayer? Because there were in old time, some *who thought it not culpable* to believe, that the departed were still interested in our welfare. I cannot continue the enumeration. If the dogmas of the present day, had a counterpart in ancient error, it would afford them no defence. It is not a noble culprit who wishes to have associates in his condemnation. Yet of such a nature is the Irish Gentleman's defence. He is contented if he can prove the Fathers pagans.

Go on, and let me see
All that disgraced my betters, met in me.

Even if the doctrines taught in ancient times were fully as unscriptural as those by which the Church of Rome is distinguished, a better excuse should be sought out, if it could possibly be found, than that which merely assigns an original to evil; but when the effort is vain, to fasten upon the writers of early times so grievous an imputation; when it is found that errors of comparatively a venial character, (arising out of the weaknesses of nature, and to which, those who first held them supplicated indulgence rather than demanded assent,) have been magnified and distorted into "abominations," which are promulgated by the sword, and the dungeon, and the stake, where Popery is strong, and by the menace of everlasting damnation where she is feeble—it is

not too much to say, that the endeavour to bring under the same judgment the Fathers of the fifth century and the Fathers of Trent, is, at the least, as unjustifiable, as it would be in the modern historian who should confound the principles of English Freedom with those of French Revolution; or identify Mr. Fox and his supporters in the British House of Commons, in feelings and in crimes, with Robespierre and his associated monsters during the Reign of Terror.

CHAPTER XV.

Ancient Faith of Ireland—Singular method of Defence—
Church of Ireland independent—Baronius—Lanigan—
Adrian's grant.

THERE is not throughout the two volumes of the Travels a more memorable passage than the Epistle Dedicatory. "To the people of Ireland, this defence of their ancient national faith, is inscribed by their devoted servant, the editor of Captain Rock's Memoirs." The people of Ireland are not scrupulous in their choice of a defender, or as to the nature of their defence, if they accept the champion. Throughout the seven hundred pages which follow this ambitious dedication, the existence of the Irish people and of their faith seems almost forgotten, and among the few exceptions to a total oblivion of their cause, none are laudatory; while one is a sarcasm too cruel and contemptuous to need the increase of bitterness it receives, because an "own familiar friend" has spoken it. "When I heard eminent, learned, and in the repute of the world, estimable men, representing the faith, which I had had the misfortune to inherit as

a system of damnable idolatry, whose doctrines had not merely the tendency but the prepense design to encourage imposture, perjury, assassination, and all other monstrous crimes, "*I was already prepared by the opinions I had myself formed of my brother papists*, to be but too willing a recipient of such accusations against them from others." What a client and cause must an advocate be supposed to have, who could avow these insulting suspicions.

But, perhaps, it was in the person of an adversary the Irish Gentleman stigmatized his Church; perhaps he spoke in raillery and only to give higher zest to the poignant praises which were to follow. He has left no such explanation or defence. The taunt seems to have been uttered and forgotten; the cause of Ireland abandoned. All parts of the world "from Gades to the Ganges," were honoured with the traveller's visits. All libraries were explored; all languages (I had almost said) gave their aid to enlarge the traveller's stores;—the tongue alone of the nation whose faith he would defend, is not heard among them; neither has the learning of his country obtained the tribute of a passing praise. Upon the character of those whose defence he volunteered, he has flung one withering taunt—on the faith which they profess, he has darted a gleam of lurid suspicion, and having thus betrayed his associates and their cause, he abstains from pleading a single circumstance to mitigate the execration his disclosures were calculated to draw down on his unfortunate country.

And this is called a "defence," and professes to have been made by a "devoted servant." There is so much gravity in the style of the Irish Gentleman's performance, that it seems hazardous to pronounce it a covert assault upon the outworks of the Church of Rome: and yet there is much in the *Travels* to encourage such an idea. In the first place, no peculiarity of that Church *is defended*. The utmost that is

even professedly attempted, is to show that some of the doctrines now held by the Church of Rome, and condemned by Protestants, were approved by certain writers of antiquity, whose opinions may be learned in works ascribed to them, and published after passing under the necessary revision. Thus, he endeavours to show that the sprinkling with water, the practice of crossing—the action of striking the breast are orthodox and venerable. This, it is evident, is no defence; even were it established, it could prove no more, (if the observances are frivolous or forbidden) than that the present is not the first age of folly—but for the weightier matters of the law, the poor recommendation of such correspondence has not been provided. The “imposture, the perjury, the assassination, and the other monstrous crimes,” which the defender suspected to constitute the morals of Popery when he could know her only in the characters of her children, and which when he had fuller acquaintance with her creed, he did not think it convenient to disclaim—he has left without a parallel.

There is, however, a species of favour shown to the ancient creed of Ireland. It has been protected alike from the patronage and the suspicions of its defender. It has been but once alluded to, and that in the dedication. While by a species of forced conscription, the Churches of primitive times, on the Continent, in Africa, in Asia, have furnished materials for the “defence,” the “ancient faith” of Ireland has not contributed a single similitude in acknowledgment that it made common cause with popery. The exemption is the more remarkable, because it is not wholly exclusive. The Bible too has been spared, the few and unimportant references to Scripture only marking and rendering emphatical the systematic abstinence to which they form an exception. This *is* a defence—to be comprehended in the same act of oblivion with the word of God, and excluded from all

participation in the practices and principles to which the defence of the Irish apologist has proved damnable.

But, although the "national faith" has been thus effectually guarded from joining with the Church of Rome in her challenges, and being convicted by her advocate; all who love the memory of ancient days have just reason to complain, that the Church of Ireland had not the benefit of more than a tacit defence against the suspicions cast upon a creed which has been most falsely imputed to her. Our early history is not inglorious. Ireland had once "a national faith," a church ordered in the fair freedom of an independent establishment, and although the Irish Gentleman may have found it unsuitable to the character of his work to allude to a subject on which the pride of his countrymen might honourably rest, there are some to whom a brief, but more direct "defence of the ancient, national faith," even from one who has no such recommendation as the editor of Captain Rock's Memoirs can boast, may not be unacceptable.

There are one or two allegations respecting the ancient estate of Ireland so generally acknowledged, that it would be a waste of time to attempt establishing their accuracy. One is, that Christian missionaries were sent from this country to various parts of the world, and that the schools of Ireland were in such repute as to attract numerous students of "divers tongues and nations." The name, also, by which Ireland was distinguished, was "the Isle of Saints," an appellation not boastfully assumed by her own children, but willingly conferred upon her by the reverence of foreigners whom she had instructed.* These are matters respecting which it would be only a waste of time to offer proof. It is also a matter of notoriety to all acquainted with our

* Prophetically given, some say, in Pagan times.

national history, that the reputation of its ecclesiastical estate was preserved without a blot, until the unsettlement effected by the descents and incursions of predatory barbarians had sapped the strength of the country, and corrupted the principles of the people.

But while all this is admitted, there is a point which must be proved, namely, that, during a portion of the time when Ireland was accounted the Isle of Saints, while her schools were thronged with foreigners, while her missionaries went forth into every region and all Christendom honoured her, *she was not in communion with the Church of Rome.*

I do not enter into an examination of the question, whether the patron saint of Ireland had a "mission" as it is called, from the see of Rome. This is a matter which I may consider settled by one who was better qualified to illustrate the antiquities of his country, than any writer of modern times. But he is removed, and were I to think of prosecuting his inquiries, his place would, indeed, be most unworthily occupied. I abstain also from reference to testimonies said to have been borne by Bishops and Presbyters of the Irish Church in primitive times, or to discrepancies in doctrine between their creed and that of the Church of Rome. Such an examination could not be brief if it were at all to be respected. Testimonies favourable and testimonies adverse to Protestant doctrine by one not scrupulous in his selection, could be produced in superfluous and bewildering abundance, and on the entire mass of evidence, the result of careful inquiry, it is probable, would draw down suspicion. I confine myself, therefore, to a historical statement which seems to furnish irrefragable proof of the independence of the Church of Ireland.

The following passage is from the history of the Cardinal Baronius. "With one consent (*junctis*

animis) all the Bishops who were in Ireland stood up for the defence of the "Three Chapters." They added also this iniquity, that when they found the Roman Church to have equally adopted the condemnation of those chapters, and to have strengthened by its consent the fifth Council, they separated from it, and joined themselves to the schismatics who were in Italy, or in Africa, or in other regions, haughty in a vain confidence that they stood up for the Catholic faith, while defending the acts of the Council of Chalcedon."* The importance which the Cardinal attached to this separation, the following expression will attest. "It happened," he says, "by the envy of a foul dæmon, that while the Gallican Church was illustrious in so many lights, the Church in Ireland, which had hitherto been well ordered, was covered with thick darkness, suffering shipwreck whilst it did not follow that bark of Peter which goes on before all, showing the way to the port of safety." Here, then, whatever Ireland may have previously been, it is most fully and clearly, and with an authority which cannot be gainsayed, declared, that she withdrew from communion with the Church of Rome; that is to say, that she pronounced that Church alien from "the Catholic faith." The separation took place in the year 556, and, until Adrian the Fourth, by the sword of England, and dissension in Ireland, succeeded in the assertion of papal prerogative, our Church was national and independent.

It would appear as if strong efforts were made by the Church of Rome to win back the Irish into friendship and communion. At least we have to that effect the testimony of Baronius. He has cited passages from an Epistle of Gregory the Great to the Bishops in Ireland, soliciting them to be reconciled to the Church over which he presided. Gregory also sent

* Baronii, Ann. Cen. 556.

a book, written, as he stated, by his predecessor Pelagius, but of which he was himself supposed to be the author, in defence of the proceedings at the second Council of Constantinople. Of the argument enforced in this book, Gregory appears to have entertained a very high opinion, and says, that if, after reading it, the heads of the Irish Church continue unchanged, "they will show more of obstinacy than of reason." All, however, seems to have been ineffectual. No acknowledgment was obtained on the part of the Ecclesiastics in Ireland, in favour of the second Council of Constantinople; nor was the object which Gregory proposed accomplished, although it was to win the Church of Ireland to be reconciled, not to bring it under subjection.

Some members of the Church of Rome have denied that these solicitations of Gregory were addressed to the Irish Bishops. In some editions of his works, the words "*per Hiberniam*" have not been found; and it has been conjectured that the circumstances of the Bishops in Istria correspond better with the scope and character of the Epistle. It matters little to the main argument, how such matters are decided. That the Church of Ireland discontinued all connexion with that of Rome, because the Roman Church approved the second Council of Constantinople, has been placed beyond a doubt. If the old editions of Gregory's works are incorrect, and the more modern editions authorized in their omission of words which describe the Irish Bishops as those whom Gregory addressed, it follows only, that the documents on which the faith of Roman Catholics depend, are extremely uncertain, and that the Church of Ireland, in her revolt, or schism, (or whatever name the assertion of independence may receive,) was undisturbed by supplication to return, as she was unassailed by anathemas upon her breach of union.

At the time when this formal separation took place, the Church of Ireland appears to have been held in honour, nor did its reputation, because of the breach, decline. The canons of the first four councils, she had received; against the acknowledgment of the fifth, she had remonstrated, and when expostulation proved ineffectual, she exercised the privilege of an independent Church and separated from those whom she could not persuade to be of one mind with her. For this, it does not appear that her schools were less frequented, or her missionaries held in disesteem. The Church of Ireland had still not only a name that it lived, but also honourable testimonies that its ministration was effectual.

It is to be observed, also, among the attestations to the character of the Irish Church, that her children adhered steadfastly to her discipline, even when they dwelt among those who censured their national observances. Thus Columbanus, subsequently to the date of the separation, "although living in France, continued to observe the Irish mode of computing Easter. Some Gallican Bishops," Lanigan continues, "gave him a great deal of trouble on this account. Accordingly, he wrote a letter to the Pope, in which he strenuously defends the Irish system, and requests his decision on the question, *telling him, however, that the Western Churches*, meaning those of Britain and Ireland, *will not agree* to anything contrary to the authority of St. Jerome, whom he considered as having approved of the calculation on which it was founded."* The Epistle in which this strong declaration is contained, setting the authority of a learned priest above that of the Bishop of Rome, and maintaining the dignity of the Irish Church, as not second to that of the Gallican or the Roman—at least denying the right of any Church to exercise authority

* Lan. Ecc. Hist. Vol. II. p. 270.

over her,*—would not have been tolerated, if her separation had not been accounted a guilty schism.

Nor was it by adherence to points of discipline alone, the Irish Church was honorably distinguished. Her children not only maintained, in the stranger's land, the questioned observances of their national Church, but they dared to disregard the fashion by which Christian literature was degraded, and to be wise in a frivolous generation. The testimony of the historian Mosheim, although well known, is yet so pertinent to the occasion, and, may I add, so gratifying to one whose defence of the ancient faith would not be exactly in the spirit of the Irish Gentleman's apology, that I cannot refrain from transcribing it. "The Irish or Hibernians, who in this century (the eighth) were known by the name of Scots, were the only divines who refused to dishonour their reason, by submitting it implicitly to the dictates of authority. Naturally subtle and sagacious, they applied their philosophy, such as it was, to the illustration of the truth and doctrines of religion—a method which was generally abhorred and exploded in all other nations." From time to time, we can find in ecclesiastical history proofs that the independence of the Irish Church, and its dignity, were vindicated, in the conduct of the Hibernians, during the eighth and ninth centuries. In the darkness that ensued, they became partially obscured, until in the beginning of the twelfth century the Church of Ireland was again, and in extraordinary circumstances, brought under the notice of the general reader.

The grant of Adrian, to his countryman Henry the Second, is too well known to require or justify

* This is the more correct expression. The testimonies are numerous, that the Bishopric of Rome was first in the order of precedence in the Western part of Europe. It was when that See added power to dignity, "mystery" was revealed.

any prolonged detail. A few brief extracts from the Bull, upon which so important consequences waited, will be sufficient to explain its connection with the "defence of the ancient national faith." "There is no doubt," the Pope declares, "but that Ireland, and all the islands on which Christ the Sun of Righteousness hath shown, and which have received the doctrines of the Christian faith, do belong to the jurisdiction of St. Peter, and of the holy Roman Church, as your Excellency also doth acknowledge. And therefore we are the more solicitous to propagate the righteous plantation of faith in this land." No such doctrine as of the jurisdiction of the Roman Church was asserted, when Ireland, in a purer age, separated from communion with it. The solicitude "to propagate the *righteous plantation* of faith," &c. is strangely at variance with the testimonies which had in better times been borne to the faith and piety of the Isle of Saints. "We therefore," the Bull in the same spirit declares, "with that grace and acceptance suited to your pious and laudable design, and favourably assenting to your petition, do hold it good and acceptable, that *for extending the borders of the Church*, restraining the progress of vice, for the correction of manners, the planting of virtue, you enter this island, and execute therein whatever shall pertain to the honour of God and welfare of the land, and that the people of this land receive you honourably, and reverence you as their Lord."

Thus it is clear that Henry entered into Ireland for the purpose of "enlarging the borders of the Church." The condition, also, is well known, which the Bull recites, "that you are willing to pay from each house a yearly pension of one penny to St. Peter." If we have the testimony of a papal historian, that there was a time when Ireland separated from Rome, and would not hold communion with her, much less acknowledge her superiority, we have

here the vindictive corroboration of the Papal See authorizing a Norman Prince to "enlarge the borders of the Church," and thus declaring that those borders had not previously comprehended Ireland.

Doctor Lanigan expresses an angry astonishment that Adrian should have listened to the representations made in Henry's behalf, while he must have had positive knowledge that they were incorrect. John of Salisbury, he says, "addressing the pope in the king's name, asked him for permission for his master to take possession of Ireland, for the purpose of enlarging the boundaries of the Church, of announcing to unlearned and rude persons the truth of the Christian faith, and extirpating the weeds of vice from the field of the Lord."* The historian utters an indignant exclamation, and proceeds, "It is strange that the pope could have *listened to such stuff*, while he knew that Palliums had been sent, only three or four years before that time, to Ireland, by his patron and benefactor, Pope Eugenius the Third," &c. &c. Had the word "believed" been a substitute for "listened," the expression would have been more correct. It was not strange that an ambitious Bishop of Rome should have *listened* to any representation which justified an exercise of power, or encouraged the assertion of high prerogative. Indeed, the Bull of Adrian may be looked upon as the last act in the series of endeavours to bring the Church of Ireland into connection with, and under subjection to, the Roman See. The epistle of Hildebrand to the nobles and prelates of Ireland, was followed up by such measures as were calculated to induce a peaceful and willing recognition of his authority. It is easy to imagine the species of seduction to which the Irish Ecclesiastics were exposed. War and adversity had reduced their power and

* Lanigan's Ecc. His. Vol. IV. p. 159.

deteriorated their character. They were no longer the wise and learned body which the first invasion of the northern spoiler had found them; they no longer experienced the same consideration in a country where order had been very grievously shaken. They could easily be taught to understand how very greatly it might advance their interests to become united with a Church whose power was now acknowledged in all other parts of Europe, and by whose interference that respect and just dealing could be compelled from their semi-barbarous and demoralized chieftains, which, relying on their own merits and exertions, they were hopeless of obtaining. Yet, notwithstanding the favourable circumstances of a conjuncture, when Rome was most powerful, subtle, and rapacious, and the Irish ecclesiastical polity, if not in actual debasement, in the sorest distress; it was to the sword recourse was had, for the purpose of obtaining authority over an island which eighty years of disaster and intrigue had not been able to reduce within "the borders of the Church."

My limits are too circumscribed to admit of an ample consideration of the means adopted to introduce into this country the practices of the Roman Church. The labours of Gillebert bishop of Limerick, and of Malachy bishop of Down, the gradual introduction of the Roman discipline, the circumstances under which the pall was solicited and obtained for the bishopric of Armagh, for the first time, *in the twelfth century*, the answer returned to an application on behalf of the Church of Cashel, in which the pope showed his desire to obtain a formal recognition of his power from the Irish bishops,* and finally the

* "St. Malachi then applied for the confirmation of the new Metropolitan See (Cashel) which was immediately granted; but on applying also for the Pallium, the Pope replied: "This is a matter which must be transacted with

Canon of the Synod of Cashel, A. D. 1172, that "all divine matters be *henceforth* conducted agreeably to the practices of the holy Church according as observed by the Anglican Church," are pregnant with assurance of the ancient independence of the national Church in Ireland, and of the contrivances by which its freedom was annihilated.

I shall conclude my notice of evidence on this subject, by reminding the reader of the unmeasured and indecent abuse with which Cambrensis reviled the Irish Church and people for their disobedience to the Papal See, "because they did not pay Peter's pence," &c., and of the decisive fact that, when in the reign of Richard I. a legate was appointed for Ireland, his jurisdiction was limited to that part of the country over which the sway of England had been extended.*

It would not, however, be just to omit all notice of an objection which has sometimes been urged against the affirmation that the Irish Church was independent. An old Canon has been cited to prove that it acknowledged the Supremacy of the Roman See, and, although considerable doubt has been entertained and expressed respecting the genuineness of many of

great solemnity. Do you, *summoning the bishops and clergy and the chiefs of your country*, celebrate a general council, and *after ye shall all have agreed on this point*, apply for the Pallium, by means of respectable persons, and it shall be given you."—Lanigan *Ecc. His.* Vol. IV. 27. The hesitation of the pope has been ascribed to a dread, that there was not in Ireland a disposition to receive his gift of the Pallium with suitable respect. His ready condescension to the request of Malachi on behalf of Armagh, and his unwillingness to yield a similar indulgence in favour of Cashel until he were better assured of the disposition to receive his favours than he could be by the northern bishop, may favour the supposition. It is however equally probable, that he was desirous to obtain a public and general acknowledgment of his supremacy.

* Columb. Hist. Add.

these ancient regulations, it may not be without its use to show the species of evidence by which the advocates of the Papal power would confirm their assertions. The Canon is attributed to a Synod of Auxilius, Patricius, Secundinus, and Benignus, and is to the following effect: "Should any very difficult cause arise, upon which the Scottish people cannot decide (atque ignota cunctis Scotorum gentium judicis) it is to be duly referred to the See of the Archbishop of the Hibernians, that is, of St. Patrick, and the examination of the prelate or priest, (hujus antistitis examinationem.) But if, in that See with its wise men (Sed in illa cum suis sapientibus) such cause of the aforesaid business cannot easily be adjusted, we desire that it is to be sent to the Apostolic See, that is, to the chair of Peter having the authority of the City of Rome." Hence Doctor Lanigan infers not only the Primacy of Armagh, but also, "that the Irish Church did from the beginning acknowledge the supremacy of the See of Rome.—Otherwise," he asks, "would it have referred its difficult questions to a See so distant from Ireland, while at that period there were several eminent Churches much nearer to us, such as those of Tours, Toledo, &c. unless a peculiar prerogative were believed to belong to the chair of St. Peter?"* I shall wave all consideration of the doubts which the historian throws on the date of the Canon, and regarding it as authentic and genuine, endeavour to answer his question.

There are questions to which a question not only supplies, but is, the most appropriate reply; perhaps this is one of them. A Roman Catholic, in the creed of Pius the Fourth, *promises and swears* true obedience to the pope. Could such an obligation have been known, when the Bishop of Rome was ap-

* Lanigan Ecc. Hist. Vol. II, p. 391.

pointed to be the arbitrator in cases upon which the Irish Churches could not agree, and when the appointment was made to rest on the authority of four individuals? Does not the document ascribed to these divines bear all the characters of independence? Does it not imply that of their own free will they selected an arbitrator, that, by their authority alone, and not by any previous rule to whose constraint they submitted, not by any religious principle which all were bound to recognize, it was thenceforth determined, that whenever the Churches in Ireland conceived a cause too difficult for their adjudication, and were in need of foreign council, they should seek it at the See which was second in dignity to no other, and was acknowledged to be highest in rank of all the Western Churches?

Surely, the dignity of the Roman Church furnishes an abundant reply to Dr. Lanigan's question. Neither Tours nor Toledo were of equal eminence with Rome, nor could the greater convenience of consulting with any of the Continental Churches be a sufficient reason for debarring Ireland from availing herself of assistance from the See which had precedence before them all. It is indeed probable, that convenience was but little consulted in framing the canon; that it was accounted desirable, rather, to discourage applications out of which foreign influence might grow, and to deny facilities by which the indolent and unlearned could escape from the labour of thought and study. It is not by any means unreasonable to suppose that the very remoteness of Rome recommended its arbitration. The influence of a distant see was less to be apprehended, and the practice of appealing attended by much labour and expense was less likely to become inveterate. If the framers of the canon were influenced by considerations of this character, their providence has been vindicated in the result, the argument from appeals to the Church

of Rome being, to the advocates of papal power, of a very unsatisfactory nature, and the authority of the Roman Bishop being in the end, forced upon an unwilling people, by that civil sword which, it is strongly insisted by those who swear to pay him true obedience, the pope ought not to employ.

History does not furnish a more striking example of retributive justice than it displays in its records of Ireland. When a British Monarch, as the vassal and minister of an imperious prelate, conducted his armies into this land, he found a people whose especial honour it was, that they alone, of all the nations of Europe had a national Church. Against the existence of this independent ministration, artifice and force were exerted; calumny seems as if it had been encouraged to defame "the ancient national faith," and the valour and the violence of a haughty and exasperated soldiery were not slack to execute vengeance. For a time, where England was, there was Popery; where, amid distresses and disunion, the cause of Ireland was maintained, there, still, a national Church subsisted. A change took place, and the Bishop of Rome, whose power, in better times, had been resisted, or whose authority had been denied, viewed in a new relation, as an enemy of the conqueror, came to be regarded as an ally and a protector. Finally, when England was instructed in a purer faith, and had shaken off the yoke which she had been the instrument to place upon the reluctant Churches of Ireland, her own works rose in the judgment against her, and, at this day, she has the mortification to see, that the influence of Popery is mightier and its principles more intolerant, in the country upon which the force of her arms inflicted it, than in any other portion of the civilized world.

But, perhaps, one of the most remarkable characteristics of the debasement into which Ireland has been degraded is, that extreme of servility, "the for-

getfulness of her free day," to which crime and adversity have reduced her. When the degenerate Grecian kindles at the thought of Lacedæmon or Athens, nay, when the slave under the lash of a cruel taskmaster bethinks him of the barbarism in which he was free, there is a principle of elevation in his remembrances which protects him from abasement, but when an Irishman, in his religious and his national feelings, is inflamed with ardent zeal in ministering to the grandeur of that power which smote the independence and eclipsed the glory of his Church and nation, his prejudices are baser than any ignobility of condition. What language can adequately describe the boldness of one, who, professing to defend the ancient faith of Ireland, beguiles his unsuspecting readers into a daring and elaborate argument in defence of that Church by which her ancient faith was extinguished ; what can account for his temerity, if it be not the character of a people who will accept and eulogize this foul scorn to the monuments wherein the history of their country is venerable.

I once fondly cherished the hope that I should see a real defence of my country's ancient faith—a defence in which the renown of the mighty men who had rendered their nation illustrious, would have been called forth from obscurity, and their reputation vindicated against scepticism and fable—but he is gone whose thoughts dwelt amidst national remembrances, to whom the stories and the sentiments of those who enlightened our early day, were dear and familiar, and the defence of the ancient national faith of Ireland is confided to an adventurous and misguided youth, to whom it does not appear that even the names of the saintly train, whose light was glorious in the days of old, have ever been made known.

But, that I may conclude this painful subject, I would entreat the reader who may have perused the

two volumes of the "defence," to pause and reflect whether, in any single passage the ancient faith of Ireland has been honoured with even the most unceremonious notice. Will it be said that the faith of this country was the same with that of Rome, and that the interests of both are cared for in the advocacy of either? It was not becoming to discard all Irish testimony in a professed defence of the Irish faith, and it was imprudent to assume, as a matter which admitted of no dispute, that the Church which history represents as independent, while the rest of Europe was enslaved, was the only ecclesiastical system of whose ancient subserviency to the Papal power, proof was unnecessary. What can be the meaning which the Irish Gentleman ascribes to "ancient?" Is his antiquity no older than the days of Adrian? Or what has Rome done—what benefits has she conferred, that the promised defence of our ancient national faith should have been thus postponed for her, that among the testimonies borne by various tongues and nations, the sages and saints of Ireland shall have been commanded to keep silence? What has Rome conferred upon our ancient Church? Do we see reason to be thankful for her instructions or her protection? Are we indebted to her for the wise men who rendered "the national faith" an object of veneration in foreign lands, or for the no less illustrious sages to whose wisdom the learned of distant regions resorted! No; the period of glory was also the period of independence, and the Irishman who can make or adopt such a defence as that of the juvenile apologist, must have quaffed oblivion to the ancient faith of his country, and, forgetting the honours of eight hundred splendid years, must commence his æra of national pride with the alliance between Adrian and Henry the Second, and the undertaking of the British monarch to "enlarge the borders of the Church,"

and impart an approved "ancient national faith" to Ireland, on the lances of his Norman adventurers.*

There was once, as the story books say, but, as I believe in this particular instance, truth affirms, in Dublin, a man who professed himself a convert from the Church of Rome, and who, for many years, led a life by which he became conspicuous as an example of piety, and acquired considerable influence over the minds of Protestants, who believed his zeal to be pure and holy. He was of humble rank, and of education lowly as his estate; but a seemingly steadfast faith, and a most exemplary demeanor, recommended him to the notice and esteem of the wise and noble, and won reverence for him from numbers who were of his own condition. While he lived in this odour of sanctity, as, on a day of public fast or thanksgiving, he walked down the crowded aisle of Christ Church, where multitudes, before departing, waited to gaze on the holy convert, as he passed with slow step, and eyes which noticed nothing earthly, those who were nearest beheld him suddenly start and turn his agitated looks upwards, and then, to the consternation of the crowded assembly, fall to the ground as if a thunderbolt had crushed him. All was alarm and confusion. At length the holy man recovered life and his faculties, and explained to a wondering audience the cause of his affliction. He had been a hypocrite for nine years, professing attachment to the Church

* I have thought it advisable to confine my proofs, that Ireland was not governed in spirituals by the Church of Rome, to the assertion of the independence of her Church. The examination of doctrines would be equally available to establish the purity of our national faith, but it should be more extensive than my limits would permit. It is much to be desired, that in the publication of Archbishop Usher's works, the University will print, in such a form as may render it accessible to all students, his dissertation on the ancient religion of Great Britain and Ireland.

of England, while at heart convinced that, in denying the religion he had abjured, he was guilty of the sin against hope. The blessed Virgin had compassion on him, even in his blasphemy, and had, by revealing herself to his sinful eyes, awakened within him a better spirit, and delivered him from the demon which had driven him out into Protestantism. She had done more,—she had bestowed upon him, while he lay entranced, the gift of tongues, that he might convince the world of his miraculous recall to the truth, and win converts to the Church, as on the day of Pentecost, the apostles had attracted them. He was now in his right mind—he was determined to relinquish all the ill got gains of his apostacy, and he was prepared to submit to the examination of any learned persons who were desirous to test a miracle.

This memorable event befel in the days of Usher, to whom the office of examination was of course confided. He entered upon his task with all the advantages which his extensive knowledge could bestow, and with an interest proportioned to the great importance of the occasion. It was matter of amazement to all who witnessed this singular trial of power, wherein genius and erudition contended against (what but a day before had been accounted) the simplicity of ignorance without guile, to observe the composure with which the relapsed convert met and solved the difficulties proposed to him. Books in various languages and characters, of ancient and modern times, were read with a facility which amazed the multitude, and interpreted with an accuracy which set the acumen of the examiner at defiance. The wonder grew—the audience felt a sense of awe stealing upon them—the gifted object of the Virgin's interposition became more and more confident—the Archbishop waxed pale. Usher, in his difficulties, always had immediate recourse to prayer. He withdrew for a few moments to implore assistance, the audience with intense

anxiety, the pretender to a new apostleship, with untroubled countenance, awaiting his return. But the confident countenance became changed, when it looked upon the pages next spread before it. In the miraculous gift of tongues the Welsh language had been forgotten. The excitement which followed the imposter's detection need not be described; it is necessary only to say, that he made his confession, to the effect that he had, from early life, been devoted to the service of the Church of Rome—that he had been highly instructed, even in his younger days, but that from the time when he in outward seeming joined the Church of England, his secret hours, under careful and learned preceptors, were devoted to studies by which he had almost succeeded in his bold and criminal undertaking.

So far as the imposture and hypocrisy are concerned, this story is not applicable to the case of the Irish Gentleman, whose hypocrisy was altogether of a contrary nature; but it may serve the purpose of a good example, (the detected contriver of the pious fraud having become a convert to the truth,) or, to those who think that the ancient Irish faith is defended by advocating Popery, and who travel East and West for foreign testimonies in its favour, it may serve as a warning that there is a domestic difficulty for which they must first provide a solution; namely, that the ancient Church of Ireland, before Adrian's Bull and Henry's invasion, could boast of innumerable wise and holy men, had fame abroad and pure religion at home, and had not a single Bishop, in whose appointment or approval, or mission, as it is called, the Pope of Rome was concerned.

CHAPTER XVI.

Council of Trent bears testimony to the corruption of Romish doctrine, and does not reform it—Index Expurgatorius—Catechism—Missal.

IT is an expedient to which Roman Catholic advocates have recourse, and from which the Irish Gentleman has not refrained, to quote, from the Homilies of the Church of England, testimony against the worship of idols. The argument which they profess to have gathered from (every reader of the Homilies will say) a very superficial consideration of the favourite passage, is, that if idolatry were general and of long continuance, Satan prevailed against the Church. I sincerely hope, that references to the Homilies may encourage some inquiring spirits to read them; in which case they will need no defence, nor will such defences as are usually offered of the Roman Church satisfy those who shall have seen, in the discourses to which they have been guided by an unaccountable temerity of quotation, its idolatrous worship faithfully exhibited. The Homilies are not documents to every sentence or paragraph of which ministers or members of the Church of England are required to yield assent. We profess to believe that they “contain godly and wholesome doctrine,” but not, that *every* expression and precept found in them is necessarily holy and true. The Roman Catholic who, in obedience to the suggestions of those who misrepresent them by inadequate quotations, shall study carefully, and with a remembrance of the place assigned to them in the Church of England, these excellent discourses, will not have mispent his time, and, if he love truth better than opinion, will be amply re-

compensated for the mental disquietude he may at first experience.

But, the Homilies can take care of themselves. My business is with a very different species of composition, namely, the decrees, of what has been styled the sacred and œcumenical Council of Trent. My purpose is to show, that by the declarations of that Council, the Church of Rome has been accused of error, and that, from the manner in which the Council terminated its sittings, the accusation of error hangs round it still.

In the eighteenth session of the Council of Trent, a decree was passed, declaratory of corruption in the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and appointing a mode and instrument of reformation. After the usual exordium, the decree proceeds thus. The council “especially meditates, how it may, *at length*, restore to its proper purity and splendour the doctrine of the Catholic faith, which, in consequence of discordant opinions (*multorum inter se dissidentium opinionibus*) has been, in many particulars, corrupted and obscured (*pluribus locis inquinatam et obscuratam.*” “Since then, in the first place it has observed, that the number of suspected and pernicious books in which impure doctrine is contained, and is far and widely dispersed, has very much increased, which has called forth many censures in various provinces, and especially in the blessed city of Rome, while yet no salutary correction has been applied to this so great and pestilent disease, the council has decided, that Fathers chosen for such an inquisition shall diligently consider, and in a convenient session report to the council, in order that with the greater facility it may be enabled to separate the divers and strange doctrines as tares from the wheat of Christian truth, and more conveniently deliberate and determine on those things which shall seem opportune to remove scruples from many minds, and to take away the causes of many

complaints.” Thus fully and plainly was it pronounced by an “infallible tribunal” that the doctrine of the Church of Rome was “corrupt and obscure” and this, not in matters of minor importance, but in what is styled the “Catholic Faith.”

It was not to be expected, that the unsoundness of the Roman Church should be authoritatively exposed, and all further care of its interest abandoned. Accordingly, a method of restoration was provided. Chosen individuals were appointed to institute an inquiry into the character of the books in which sound doctrine was opposed, as well as into works in which the faith was mingled with error. When a large number of such publications had undergone the censure of pious and learned men, it was decreed that the council, sitting in its infallibility, should fully examine the labours of their delegates, and pronounce a final judgment on all that concerned doctrine and the mode of its enunciation. The benefits likely to result from such a proceeding were obvious. While the labours of the council were lightened, and their deliberations left vacant for matters of more pressing importance, the select committee could give up all its care to the examination and censure of books; and on the report of those “chosen Fathers,” infallibility could assert its prerogative, and set a stamp of authority on the decisions to which the inquisition of books had afforded grounds and facilities.

In the twenty-fifth session, the list of books examined and censured was submitted for the decision of the council. The select committee had examined the writings of heretics, of the faithful, and of anonymous authors. It had censured books in which uncompensated evil was taught, as well as those in which pure doctrine was mixed with error; and when the assembled Fathers proceeded to investigate the issue of labours undertaken at their command, so many particulars were to be examined, and matters

of so much delicacy were to be decided, that the council confessed its inability or indisposition to revise them, transferring to the Pope the office of determining a matter on which, especially, an infallible authority should have pronounced. The decree was to the following purport. Reciting, first, the Act by which the committee of inquiry was instituted, it proceeds : “Hearing now that the last hand has been set to the work, and yet that, on account of the *variety and multitude* of books, the matter cannot be distinctly and conveniently adjusted by the holy Synod, it commands that whatever the committee has done shall be referred *to the Roman Pontiff*, that, by his judgment and authority, it may be determined and promulgated.” The case of the Church of Rome, therefore, is thus fairly represented. An infallible council declared that its *doctrine of faith* was corrupted and obscure ; and, in order to provide a remedy, appointed select divines to discriminate between truth and error in published works, to whose influence Roman Catholics were likely to be exposed. When the discrimination had been made, the council *would not decide upon it*, and thus declared, that only private authority should supply a remedy to the evil which infallible authority had discovered and declared.

There are some, who, if they are unacquainted with the disclosures of late years, may take upon them to affirm, that affairs remitted to the Pope by the decree of a council, may be regarded as having been, by his decision, finally, and with infallible authority, adjusted. If this be so, it is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, that no man shall presume to read God’s holy Scripture, unless he have permission *in writing* from his parish priest, or the bishop of his diocese, and that even the bookseller who should supply a Bible to one not favoured with such formal certificate of permission to read, shall suffer

punishment. Such are the provisions contained in the 4th Rule of the Index Expurgatorius. Whoever, therefore, regards the proceedings of "the Congregation of the Index" as definitively settled, must consider that, if he have not a written permission to read the Scriptures, he should give up any copy of the Bible, in the vulgar tongue, which may be in his possession, or else consent to believe that he cannot, on confession of his sins, obtain absolution.*

But, in Ireland, even under this disadvantage, the Index Expurgatorius cannot be received. It has, according to the testimony of Roman Catholic prelates, in this country "no authority whatever." It had not the approval of an infallible tribunal, and, in consequence, neither is the Church of Rome to be accused of its prohibition of Scripture, nor can Roman Catholics avail themselves of its provisions as if they secured an uniform recognition of sound doctrine and an universal rejection of heresy. There is something of inconvenience, certainly, in being constrained to acknowledge a principle from which it follows, that a writer may be reputed orthodox and holy in the Church of Rome in Ireland, who has been accounted guilty of heresy by the Pope; yet such is the force of the acknowledgment which was made, and which was perhaps esteemed less objectionable than a confession that Irish Roman Catholics assented to the propriety of regulations whereby the Bible was prohibited.

The disadvantage of not having an authorized recognition and censure of books, will be obvious to any Roman Catholic in this country who inquires into the foundation of his belief. He knows that the Council of Trent declared the doctrine of faith to be "corrupted and obscure," that uncertainty was

* Congr. Ind. Reg. 4.

occasioned by the diffusion of pernicious books, that, in order to correct the evil, a committee was appointed to collect information for the Synod, that the committee having examined the works of orthodox Catholics, the works of heretics, and of individuals whose names and forms of religious belief were unknown, submitted a report of their labours, containing an account of books and errors so manifold, that the council could not pronounce upon their character, and transferred to one whose judgment was not decisive, an office which, it may be said, belonged especially to an infallible tribunal. In consequence, an Irish Roman Catholic to whom the Roman censure of books has no authority, *knows* that the doctrine of faith has been perniciously misrepresented, can only *conjecture* where it is faithfully delivered. He has an infallible testimony to its corruption. He has no more than private judgment to guide him to the truth.

In the twenty-fourth session, the Council of Trent directed that the people should be instructed in a Catechism to be prescribed "by the Holy Synod." In the following session, the Catechism, as well as the list and censures of prohibited books, was referred for the judgment of the pope.*

* Conc. Trid. Sess. 25.—"*The Catechism of Trent.*" The Fathers in Council were not all insensible to the importance of having the decision of a Council pronounced upon a Catechism, so that it should not only be published pursuant to their decree, but correct and acknowledged from their revision and approval. "The Legates, perceiving that it would take years to adjust all differences, (respecting the Index, Ritual, Catechism, &c.) proposed to refer the matter to the Pope. To this some of the Prelates did not consent, and the Bishop of Lerida made a long discourse, to show that, if any work was peculiarly worthy of a Council, it was to compose a Catechism, which, after the Creed," (the Creed at this time being, it should be remembered, the Nicene,) "should hold the first place, and the Ritual, which should

In the twenty-second session it was declared, that “although the mass contained much for the erudition of a faithful people, yet it was not thought fit that it should everywhere be celebrated in the vulgar tongue; wherefore pastors are directed frequently to explain some mystery of the sacrifice,” &c.* It was also declared, that the ceremonies of the mass needed much correction. Yet even the Missal, which should be the text-book for such expositions, was not thought worthy of Synodal recognition. It was, together with the Breviary, the Catechism, and the list of prohibited books, referred to a decision which could not stamp it with authority.†

“To look for Protestantism,” observes the Irish Gentleman, “whose corner-stone is the right of private judgment, in a Church whose system it has been

hold the second. To reform the Ritual required a correct acquaintance with antiquity, and the customs of every country; a branch of knowledge not to be found at the Court of Rome, where, however numerous were the men of talent and erudition, there were few who had applied to this department of literature, which is necessary for preparing a work worthy of transmission to posterity, and which could be better expected from a Council. The anxiety of the Fathers to terminate the Council and leave Trent, scarcely allowed him a hearing.”—*Comp. Hist. of the Council of Trent, by the Rev. B. W. Mathias*,—a work by which the proceedings of the Council of Trent are made known to the general reader, with a fidelity and conciseness which create an anxious desire for the appearance of the promised sequel. When the entire work has been completed, it will conduce, perhaps, not less to the furtherance of truth, than the splendid labours of its venerable author in another department of the Christian ministration.

The reader has not failed to observe, that the decision of the Council of Trent leaves the Roman Catholic people without a Catechism which is certified to contain pure doctrine, or a Missal in which the rites and ceremonies of their Church Service can be learned or practised, as from a duly accredited source of intelligence.

* Sess. 22. c. 8. See Appendix, No. 3.

† Sess. 25.

from the first to acknowledge no such right was, I now perceived, a gross mistake.”* What is a member of the Church of Rome to do—what is he to believe? If he deny that there is error in the “doctrine of faith” in his Church, error which it is damnable to hold, he forfeits eternal salvation because he has rejected the decree of a general Council—if in his blindness he fall into error against which he has no warning, or if the warning which has influenced him, (and which being that of one or more individuals not infallible *may* lead astray,) has misdirected him, he is damned for heresy,—and if, deserted by the Council which has proclaimed his danger, distracted by the uncertainty or precariousness of a pilotage not accredited, he trusts to God and his reason to guard him from destruction, he is wrecked for the crime of using his private judgment. Do the wildest fictions descriptive of the arts with which the fiend, when he has purchased a victim, so frames his bond as to provide for all contingencies, and shut out every avenue of escape, present a picture more revolting than that of Rome, proclaiming, to her astounded votaries, that there is peril around them by which they may be utterly destroyed, but yet that they must stand still, not to “see the salvation of the Lord,” but because, if they seek that salvation, they shall suffer loss and ruin; for the Church which, will not offer guidance or council, is ever ready to persecute with rash and unsparing maledictions? What tyranny so merciless as this, and whereunto shall we liken the generation to which an undisguised advocacy of such soul-killing despotism, of such tame and beastly slavery, can be recommended, as a defence of the ancient national faith in which Ireland once proclaimed the glorious freedom of the Gospel.

* Travels, Vol. I. p. 213.

CHAPTER XVII.

Termination of Trent Council—Confession of Incompetency
—Reformers—Luther—Calumnies against him—Cranmer
—Hildebrand canonized.

IT may be a question whether, since the confusion of tongues at Babel, any dispersion of men assembled for an important object has taken place under circumstances so surprising, and yet so characteristic as those in which the council of Trent discontinued its sittings. It had called for a report of the various objectionable doctrines, taught in books whose increase private authority had not been found able to discountenance. It assigned even the inadequacy of private exertion, of "censures in the provinces and even in the benign city of Rome," to counteract the evil, as among the reasons, why it required the inquisition to be made and the report presented. It described this inquisition and report as no more than requisite preliminaries to the considerations it proposed to hold upon them, and the judgment it should pronounce. In due time the report was made. Its recitals were neither brief nor unimportant; its list included many and various books tainted by different shades and degrees of heretical opinion; and, just then, when the Council found its worst apprehensions more than realised, when there was laid before it, in alarming prospect, the confusion and corruption of doctrine which prevailed as well within, as without, the pale of the visible Church, *the infallible council dissolved*, announcing as the reason why it undertook not to remedy evil, the very magnitude of the difficulties, that very discrepancy of opinion and confusion of tongues, which, especially, demanded its interven-

tion. It is impossible for one who believes that God ruleth in affairs of men, not to recognise in this singular confession of imbecility, a special, and almost miraculous judgment on those profane boasters of infallible power, who would build a city and a tower whose top should reach the heavens, and who, at the dispersion of Trent, beheld the tower unfinished and "left off to build the city."

Surely it is not reasonable to impute blame to the reformers, that they did not submit to a tribunal, which would not listen to the prelate who gave warning against the proclamation of its own incompetency. It would be, by far, a more compendious process to exercise infallibility according to the example of Constance, than to manifest its presence in sound and satisfactory judgment. But it would be idle to hope, that the council would listen to the oral expostulations of men, whose written works they declined examining. If the reformers refused to appear in person before the assembly, (for reasons of which it is unnecessary to remind the reader,) they could *be judged in their books*; and yet even this judgment was delegated to the pope. How inconsistent is it, therefore, to tax as disobedience to the decisions of a solemn tribunal, disregard of an assembly which passed upon itself, in the very instance in which its judgment was most to be looked for, the sentence of incompetency and extinction.

But if the Church of Rome or its avenging spirits were denied the opportunity to convince the reformers of their errors, there has been no want of inclination to launch the anathema which should scatter their ashes or blast their memories. It is a favourite mode of argument with many an advocate of infallibility, who would hold himself disgraced by adducing so irrelevant a matter on any other occasion than one in which his Church is concerned, to gather all that slander has invented against those by whom the pa-

pal power was shaken, to collect also every mark of their weakness and indiscretion, and to ask are the vices or the frailties of such men arguments in favour of the Protestant religion.

It would be well if they would propose the question in another form, are these vices favourable to the Church of Rome. Supposing it admitted that Luther was stained with the sinful practices, and the superstitious opinions imputed to him, does his iniquity in the slightest degree affect the question at issue between Protestants and the Church wherein he had been instructed? Supposing that the Church of Rome, which had the care of Luther's childhood and of his youth, permitted him to grow up with dispositions to evil, which her infallibility had neither corrected nor discovered, does it constitute an argument for the purity of her faith, that she had not prevented him from becoming the guilty thing which her advocates industriously misrepresent him? That the state of a spirit is debilitated and distempered, is no proof that it has been under the training of the physician of souls. Had Luther left the Church of Rome, because it could not cure him of his corruptions, the motive of his separation would be just,* and it should be thought very injudicious, indeed, in her champions, to allege the vices which she could not correct, as proofs of her unerring power to eradicate all evil.

But, are the charges so bitterly urged against the

* There was, I always thought, wisdom in the reply of one of the traduced Cavan converts, who stated, as his motive to leave the Church of Rome, that its ministration was useless to him. "I like what I hear in the Church," says he, "but at the Chapel, for once I was in under the roof, I was twice in the yard; and when I was in, it done (did) me as little good as when I was out." Latin prayers are but solemn mockery to the anxious mind of an uninstructed peasant.

reformers founded in fact? Was Luther the monster the enemies of truth or the ready recipients of calumny are earnest to describe him? I really feel shame as I admit the bare idea of consenting to give up to slander, one whose endowments were so noble and whose purposes were so pure as those of the great reformer. It must, however, be confessed, that the frailties by which man is tempted were found in him, and often, because in his character everything was great and bold, more strongly marked than in inferior natures. It should also be kept in mind, that the idea of excellence which his faith contemplated rendered him less lenient to the passions and weakness by which true religion was offended, and thus, where others would be but lightly moved, his spirit was roused from its depths, and his complaints were loud and vehement, as he confessed, in the sincerity of a penitence that shook his soul, the sinfulness of which he was conscious. Protestants who read the Bible remember the complaints of St. Paul; if Roman Catholics read them they would be instructed that the best evidence of iniquity is not found in the sorrows by which the spirit groans under the burden of sin. Man is not reconciled to sin, so long as the thought of it afflicts him. If this had been remembered, the calumniators of Luther would discover in the strength of his expressions, rather the energy of his repentance than the enormity of his guilt.

Luther's offences, however, do not need, it is said, his confession of them. He was superstitious; he was false to his vows; he was indulgent to the criminal weaknesses of others. We should always remember how much our estimate of moral good depends upon the character of our early associations. A gentleman, (the individual of an order which the institutions of chivalry have contributed to produce) regards a direct falsehood, or an act of cowardice, as a species of impossibility. Will any man say, that

truth and courage, considered not as Christian graces, but as ornaments of human character, are to be found and expected equally in the inferior classes in society. What constitutes the difference, the moral difference? The difference of circumstances. The gentleman has been brought up in abhorrence of vices which are mean. Even where little pains are taken to communicate religious impressions, sentiments of honour are instilled; and thus the character of the high-born becomes insensibly moulded into something different from that of the humbler individual, around whose early days, no elevating associations were collected.

Let Luther's conduct have the palliation with which the circumstances of his early nurture should soften censure, and there will be found much to plead in his favour. He broke his vows of celibacy; but the Church in which he had been instructed taught him to hold vows light.* He permitted a violation

* The reader will probably remember the acknowledged principle of the Roman Catholic Church, that "oaths are not obligatory, they are perjuries rather, if detrimental to the Church," and if he look to the evidence taken before the Commissioners of Education in Ireland, he will find that the explanation offered of this characteristic principle, by the Rev. N. Slevin, is, that by detrimental to the Church is meant, detrimental to religion, and that the principle implies no more than "that unlawful oaths are not to be kept."—See *Examination of the Maynooth Professors*. He will find also matter of much interest on the subject of oaths and vows and the dispensing power in the evidence of the Rev. F. Anglade, the Rev. Dr. M'Hale, and the Rev. W. Higgins, on the same occasion. The numberless cases in which Luther had seen dispensations extended to oaths and vows, may have induced in him less regard for an obligation which he conceived contrary to the divine law. It may freely be admitted that in his own instance a man should distrust his judgment, and many may think, judging from their own feelings, that they would not disengage themselves from an obligation, simply because it was unadvisedly incurred. But it should be remembered that our notion of

of the laws of marriage;* but he belonged to a Church which interfered with matrimonial regulations—even arrogating to itself the power to remove impediments which Scripture had prescribed, and to create impediments where the Scriptures had left freedom. He was superstitious; he believed that he had held conferences with the devil.† He must have

the solemnity of an oath or vow is not acquired amidst the thousand evasions and distinctions by which in the Church of Rome its force was neutralized.

* Basnage candidly acknowledges that Luther was guilty of an offence in permitting the second marriage (if it could be called marriage) of the Landgrave of Hesse, while his former wife was still alive. At the same time, he pleads in extenuation of his offence, and in crimination of the Church in which he had been educated—that popes have permitted incest by published bulls, and that the Council of Trent pronounced an anathema against any who should deny the power of the Church to dispense, in the degrees of affinity prohibited by Scripture; and also, that it was decided by Gregory the Second, when consulted as to the doctrine of his Church, that, where a wife was afflicted with a tedious illness, a second marriage might be contracted, provided the former wife were duly provided with the necessities of life. Could the judgment of one brought up in so lax a Church be, (humanly speaking,) correct? Should his lapses be so rigorously censured, as if he had been trained in a purer system?

† Basnage accuses Bossuet of having contrived the slanderous turn given since his time to the conference, imaginary or real, of Luther with the tempter. There has been much debate on the question whether it is intended, in the account given by the reformer, to represent a real occurrence or to detail the incidents of a visionary temptation and dialogue. For my part, I esteem it a matter of very little moment to decide in which point of view Luther considered it. If the reader is not acquainted with Coleridge's profound and simple explanation of the phænomenon, and his analysis of the reformer's character, he should not long defer the pleasure and profit he can derive from the study of a dissertation rarely excelled even by its gifted author. It will seem of little moment to one who has reflected, to

been an infidel at heart, rejecting what his Church inculcated far more earnestly than the truths of the Bible, if he doubted, not the possibility but the frequency of supernatural incidents, and of demoniac appearances and solicitations.

The Irish Gentleman, not satisfied with repeating the accusations against Luther and his associates, does not shrink from the unworthy office of defaming a character which it is the interest of all who love their kind to protect from slander—a man whose course, save for the frailties that denote the evil

defend Luther against the charge of believing that his intercourse with Satan, was a real occurrence, although it would seem, from certain expressions in his report of the dialogue on private thoughts, that he conceived his detail to be that of a vision.

The only important matter to be noticed, is an insinuation that it was from his ghostly enemy he *learned* the impiety of the mass. This appears altogether, as Basnage recites the incident, a gross and inexcusable misrepresentation. The tempter, as Luther described the danger, strove to goad him into despair by reminding him how often he had perpetrated the abomination of the mass, not by disclosing to him what he had long known, its idolatrous nature. "That which affrighted me, said Luther, was, that the evil one did not speak untruth when he represented the magnitude of my crime. He produced against me two irreproachable witnesses, the law of God and my own conscience. I cannot deny that I have sinned, and that my sin is grievous. I have merited death; but the enemy desired that, like Cain, I should despair of God's mercy. It is in this combat I have need of the assistance of the Holy Spirit. I was constrained to acknowledge before the evil one, that I had sinned, that I was condemned as Judas; but I turned to Jesus Christ as St. Peter did. I embraced the merit of His death who delivered me from condemnation."—*Histoire de la Religion, &c.* Some short time since a little tract was printed in Dublin, containing a translation of the dialogue which has been so shamefully misrepresented among those who would argue against truth by calumniating her champions. It ought to be reprinted, and circulated so as to leave slander without excuse.

effects of education, and the fallen estate of man, appears to have all lain in light from Heaven. It is not for me to attempt a vindication of *Cranmer*, but it is for me to rejoice, that, as yet, when men of education and genius assail such a reputation as his, they lay aside their station and their name, and appear only as anonymous contributors to a Review, or as Irish Gentlemen disguised and on their travels. When the accusers of a spirit like his who framed the Liturgy of the Church of England, thus hide their faces as they criminate, we may well permit all history, cotemporary and of succeeding ages,—but still more we may permit the Liturgy to speak for him who had so large a share in its compilation; we may turn to that noble monument as the Roman looked to the Capitol, and feel assured that, if there be some who will remain where dark insinuations are whispered, all who love not merely the religion to which the martyr ministered, but the literature of England, will turn their backs upon the traducer, and pronounce the framer of the Liturgy acquitted. But a single word more. It is insinuated that Cranmer assisted in actions for which he should be condemned. The crime for which he suffered was heresy*—the cha-

* “As soon as Cranmer perceived what course events were likely to take after King Edward’s death, he gave orders that all his debts should be paid, to the uttermost farthing, and cancelled the bills which were due to him from persons who were not in a condition to discharge them. This being done, he said he was now his own man, and with God’s help able to answer all the world, and worldly adversities.” *Book of the Church*. After his condemnation for contumacy in not appearing at Rome while detained a close prisoner in England, “he was dealt with very differently from any of the former sufferers; for he was removed to the house of the Dean of Christ Church, and treated there rather as a guest than a prisoner, with every possible indulgence, and with every mark of real or pretended regard, some, perhaps acting from sincere attachment to him, others

racter of the treason for which he was condemned could not satisfy his revilers. If a fouler charge could be advanced against him, we may be well assured that the Edinburgh Reviewer and the Irish Gentleman

in the hope of prevailing on a mind which was naturally timid. That they succeeded is certain, but it is doubtful to what extent. The probability is, that he signed an equivocal recantation, and that the other papers, five in number, wherein he was made to acknowledge, in the most explicit terms, the doctrines which he had repeatedly confuted, and to vilify himself as a mischiefmaker and blasphemer, were fabricated by Bonner's directions. The circumstances are altogether suspicious as well as perplexed, and nothing appears certain, but that he submitted, under a promise that his life should be spared, and that he should pass it, if he did not wish for wealth or dignity, in a private station, and wherever he listed."—*Ibid.* Vol. II. p. 229.

"Of all the martyrdoms, during this great persecution, this was, in all its circumstances, the most injurious to the Romish cause. It was a manifestation of inveterate and deadly malice toward one who had borne his elevation with almost unexampled meekness. It effectually disproved the argument, on which the Romanists rested, that the constancy of our martyrs proceeded not from confidence in their faith, and the strength which they derived therefrom, but from vain-glory, and the pride of consistency, and the shame of retracting what they had so long professed. Such deceitful reasoning could have no place here: Cranmer had retracted, and the sincerity of his contrition for that sin was too plain to be denied, too public to be concealed, too memorable ever to be forgotten. The agony of his repentance had been seen by thousands; and tens of thousands had witnessed how, when that agony was passed, he stood calm and immovable amid the flames; a patient and a willing holocaust, triumphant not over his persecutors alone, but over himself, over the mind as well as the body, over fear, and weakness, and death."—*Ibid.* Vol. II. p. 232.

With such a memorial of his life as the Liturgy of the Church of England, and with such a monument as has been erected for him in the story of his martyrdom, told in the Book of the Church, the repetition of Cranmer is free from peril; neither the arrow that fleeth by day nor the pestilence that walketh by night can harm his name.

were not better disposed to bring to light his evil deeds and blacken his reputation, than the persecutors who bestowed his crown of martyrdom.

But it is said, all the Reformers were persecutors, Cranmer as well as the more intemperate. It is true, that even Cranmer's name is tarnished. His crime was not so heinous as that of the Church in which he had been educated. *He* condemned to death for what he accounted blasphemy against God, because a heresy against the Apostle's Creed—*Rome* slew her victims for denying to the Pope the honour exacted for him. There is a difference here; but still we must regret that the Reformers did not more speedily and more clearly learn to understand the religion of the Lord Jesus. Let it not, however, be forgotten, that they were educated in a Church which reckoned Lateran and Constance among its dominions, which accounted perjuries lawful, and treachery of the basest character honourable, when employed to avenge the Church by the murder of an enemy. Let it be remembered, that the darkest and the most revolting pages of human history were presented to the youthful mind of each probationer for the office of the priesthood, and that he was taught to think of the foulest enormities that disgraced his nature as transfigured when perpetrated in the service of the Church, and changed into what was laudable and fair. What was to be expected? Was it not, that coming out of intellectual darkness, objects should seem confused—men like trees walking? Was it not, that they who come forth from the tombs where humanity was putrifying, should have marks of defilement, should even have the grave clothes around them? Oscitancy, unsteadiness, even moral offence we ought to have anticipated; and in the vices which dishonoured some, and the errors which led many astray, we may read the character of the Church from which they had come forth; while

in their Apostolic preaching, their zeal, and their endurance, we recognize the triumph of faith over the vices of a most debasing education.

It seems singular, that the revilers of the Reformers and Martyrs of Protestant communions should have forgotten a remarkable distinction between the case of those whose instructors they calumniate, and circumstances in which they themselves are placed, and which might well justify opprobrious imputations. If the Reformers were even such as slander has described them, they might be serviceable in breaking down an evil system—while, if there was no recognition of their sanctity required, as of necessity, for admission into a better, the framers of a sounder discipline, or the setters forth of purer doctrine, are no wise inculpated in the guilt of those who had made the way plain before them. If, indeed, they ascribed to them an honour which was undeserved, and said, no man shall be admitted to Protestant communion who will not join in offering such an honour, there would be just ground to accuse them of abetting and encouraging the evils of which their leader and head had been guilty. Has any such folly or crime been imputed to a Protestant Church? Let it be proved, and let that Church have its candlestick removed. Has even the most honoured in any Protestant assembly, been, by the act of men, elevated to Heaven, to intercede there for the people who make supplication to him? What is it to the cause of Protestantism, that its first teachers were not perfect? They did not teach men to look unto *them*. They taught, that there was none good but one—that there is none other name given under Heaven whereby we may be saved, but only the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and shall we be thankless for the revealing of this great truth from the sepulchre in which, unseen, it was burning, because they who brought it forth were

not, in all particulars, what the mind most loves to contemplate?

But, to think that Rome shall advance against the Protestant Church, as an objection, that some of the Reformers were not without a blemish—Rome, which has intruded into the Courts of Heaven a motley tribe of Deities, such as never were before imagined? Rome, which has intruded into heaven Gregory the Seventh! *Hildebrand!* the man whose life of evil could only be explained by the supposition that he was made *an instrument of the Devil!** Does Rome deny the purity of the Protestant faith, because the first Reformers retained frailties which proved them human?

CHAPTER XVIII.

Church of Ireland—Testimony to its doctrine contrasted with the testimonies afforded by the Church of Rome—Peculiar character of the Church of England.

THE Church of England has generally had the high honour paid to it by the adversaries of Protes-

* “With regard to Gregory the Seventh there is much more difficulty; he stretched the limits of ecclesiastical pretension much beyond what I would approve of. It is recorded by an ecclesiastical historian who lived shortly afterwards, that before his death he grieved very sincerely for the part he had acted, and even acknowledged that the troubles he had excited in various countries had been occasioned through *the temptations of the Devil.*”—*Most Rev. Dr. Murray, Com. Com. 1825.*

It is inexpressibly awful to think that millions of men supplicate the favour of one, who, they have reason to believe, was an instrument of evil during his life—and whose canonization may have rendered him still more serviceable to his unrighteous task-master.

tantism, that they scarcely ever directly impugn it. They speak of the licentiousness of private judgment, and the consequences of leaving every headstrong individual without constraint or advice to pursue his inclinations. They speak of the evils which have resulted from efforts to discover truth, when no respect was paid to the governance by which such efforts should be regulated. They do not speak of the admirable judgment with which the Church of England has been poised between despotism and license, exchanging infallibility for a reasonable authority, substituting for a servile reverence of the ancients, or a flippant rejection of them, a discreet and pious respect for what was taught in early times and in all countries ; a respect which recognizes in Scripture alone, truth without any mixture of error, and thus corrects and modifies the estimation in which it holds the most honoured human compositions.

Another honour is paid to the Church of England. She has a Liturgy ; Articles of Faith ; a Catechism. Against these her adversaries might consistently direct their arguments, because in these the principle of the Church is made known ; but it so happens that these are for the most part unnoticed in controversy, (we might say entirely omitted in the controversy of our Irish Gentleman,) and the testimony of individuals, some altogether unworthy of credit as witnesses, some whose evidence, by being mutilated, is misrepresented, is adduced, as if in them, and not from the authoritative declarations of the Church herself, her doctrines were to be learned. This is strange—it would seem as if the practice of invoking saints, so influenced the judgment of Roman Catholics, that even in their reasonings they will not presume to ascend higher than to a subordinate authority.

There might be some propriety in endeavouring to ascertain the doctrine of the Church of Rome from individuals in her communion, because there is not

in existence any work of authority from which her faith can be known. Her traditions are necessarily secret; she has not approved any interpretation of the Bible; she has not declared the councils which should have authority; she has not reported the proceedings of approved councils so as that their declarations can be read in an authentic form; she has not distinguished what Canons are to be received; what are to be rejected; what partially rejected and partially retained; she has not recorded the names of the Fathers to whom she consigns the office of interpreting Scripture; she has not authorized a Catechism for the instruction of her people, a prohibitory index of books in which, by exposing heresy, she would distinguish truth; she has not authorized a Missal for the services of devotion and the solemn sacrifice; she has not authorized a Breviary for the private edification of the priesthood. When we inquire, therefore, into the doctrines of the Church of Rome, we are, of necessity, constrained to accept the guidance of secondary evidence, because none better can be procured. And yet, it is the cry of Roman Catholics that this evidence ought not to have been accepted. Our answer is, we have never resorted to it but of necessity. We affirm that there is *no evidence of a primary character* as to the doctrines of the Church of Rome; her pretensions are of a nature to which exposure would be destruction; they are accordingly concealed in vagueness and mystery; her prophet of infallibility is veiled.

A single consideration will be sufficient to point out the distinction between the testimonies by which the doctrines, respectively, of the Churches of England and of Rome, can be ascertained. A Roman Catholic professes, (an ecclesiastic swears,) to receive, *without doubt*, all that was delivered, declared, and defined in the Sacred Canons and General Councils, and to condemn and anathematize all things con-

trary thereto. No infallible authority, indeed no authoritative assembly, has decided *what* Councils or *what* Canons those are, which must be without any doubt received.* A minister in the Church of England solemnly subscribes his assent and consent to the "Book of Common Prayer," and promises canonical obedience to his diocesan. The canons of the Church of England are not numerous, and are accessible to all. They were not framed for times like the present, and therefore all are not practically in operation—but they are well known, and open to examination. The Articles of Religion are found in the Book of Common Prayer, and are, as the book in which they are contained, published by authority. They affirm the doctrine, that Holy Scripture contains all truth necessary for salvation; and thus it is made evident, that the engagements of a minister of the Church of England, as to his belief, are, that he receives the Bible as the source of all necessary truth, and that he assents to the "Book of Common Prayer" as containing a sound exposition of faith, and an edifying formulary of devotion. While, then, the engagements taken to the Church of Rome exact an inquiry into the number of Councils, their proceedings, their canons, their anathemas,—an inquiry in which the infallible power has vouchsafed no assist-

* "When Roman Catholics are required to profess their assent to all things declared and defined in the canons of Councils, what Councils are meant?" "The canons universally received by the Church, or such parts of them as are received by the Church."

"The whole of some and parts of others?" "Just so."
—*Lords' Com.* 1825, *Right Rev. J. Doyle, D. D.*

The promise to receive these canons was made subsequently to the sittings of the Council of Trent. What authentic body of canons was framed since then? None *could* have been authenticated—nor has there ever been framed a body of canons, or of doctrine in the Church of Rome, on which infallibility has set its seal.

ance, and in which, consequently, secondary evidence must be received,—the engagements of a minister in the Church of England directly refer the inquirer to two books, one of which all Christians acknowledge to be true, and one which the Church of England openly professes as that by which the peculiar character of her ministration may be learned with authority.

It is clear, therefore, that when Roman Catholics pretend to derive their knowledge of Protestant doctrine, (at least the doctrines of the Church of England,) from individual testimony, they have unnecessarily abstained from the more satisfactory evidence abundantly afforded to them; and that when they complain of the selections which have sometimes been made from the evidences of doctrine taught in their own Church, affirming that such evidence has no authority, their remonstrance is unjust, because they produce no evidence of unquestionable authority, by which their creed can be ascertained.*

Far be it, however, from a member or minister of the Church of England to discountenance or discourage the habit of consulting those high authorities which, although not to be regarded as oracles of truth, have conferred honour on their Church, and have been lights to lighten those who worshipped in other communions. We would say merely, let not the writers whom we do not respect be received as bearing testimony which the formularies of our worship, and the articles of our faith, distinctly afford,—let not those whom we hold in honour, have their testi-

* The doubts and uncertainties respecting the decrees of Lateran and Constance, as expressed in the evidence of Roman Catholic Bishops and Priests before the Parliamentary Committees and the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry, in the year 1825, are sufficient to prove that the evidence as to Canons and Councils must be held conjectural.

monies marred by inadequate citations, and we shall as little shrink from placing the issue of our cause on the excellence of our divines, as the members of any other Christian communion. Nay, we are ready to admit, that the comments of our chosen divines afford considerable if not essential assistance to one who desires to understand the precise character of our institutions.

“At the present day,” observes Bishop Jebb, “it is by no means sufficiently considered, that the Church of England occupies a very peculiar station in the Christian world, constituting, as it were, a species in herself.

“Her specific temperament, indeed, has, during the last century, been most inadequately recognized at home; but it has not failed to attract the notice of foreign observers. The sagacious Mosheim, for example, and he is not singular in his statement, describes the English Church as *that correction of the old religion which separates the Britons equally from the Roman Catholics, and from the other communities who have renounced the domination of the Pope.*

“We can feel no difficulty, either in adopting or in justifying this acute and compendious definition. The Church of Rome fetters the judgment by implicit submission to authority. Foreign branches of the Reformation give unbounded license to the fancy, by the unrestricted exercise of private interpretation. But our national Church inculcates a liberal, discriminative, yet undeviating reverence for pious antiquity; a reverence alike sanctioned by reason, inspired by feeling, and recommended by authority. This principle is, in truth, our especial characteristic; a principle which has ever enabled our Church to combine discursiveness with consistency, freedom of inquiry with orthodoxy of belief, and vigorous good sense with primitive and elevated piety.

“This happy temperament is guarded by the most safe and sober limitations. The Church of England, in the first instance, and as her grand foundation, derives all obligatory matter of faith,—that is, to use her own expression, *all that is to be believed for necessity of salvation*, from the Scriptures alone; and herein she differs from the Church of Rome. But she systematically resorts to the concurrent sense of the Church Catholic, both for assistance in the interpretation of the sacred text, and for the guidance in those matters of religion which the text has left at large; and herein she differs from every other reformed communion.”*

Had the Irish Gentleman perused the above extract from one of the most eminent of modern divines, he would have, perhaps, been spared his travel to the German oracles of reason, and his readers would have been spared the knowledge of all the impiety with which the answer of the oracles has made them acquainted. Had the character of the Church of England been known, in which respect for antiquity accompanies reverence for the Scripture, and in which private judgment is at once assisted and encouraged, the evils of extreme licentiousness, the disregard of all the knowledge of early times, and the abuses of that freedom which the Church of Rome denies and the Church of England inculcates, would not have been represented as inherent in, and essential to, Protestantism. While, therefore, the Irish Gentleman adduces, as testimonies to the character of our Church, German extravagance and English formalism,—while, by partial extracts from our valued expositors, he misrepresents their meaning, may I be permitted to propose one human testimony—that from which I have extracted the preceding character of our Church,—a testimony which even the angriest ad-

* Sermons by the Rev. John Jebb, A. M., Appendix.

versary of Protestantism will admire, for the wisdom of its sentiments and the characteristic beauty of its expression.

It is well worthy of remark, that the principle, by which the divines of the Church of England were governed in ecclesiastical arrangements, is almost identical with that which, nearly a thousand years preceding, Ireland had recognized in its separation from the Church of Rome ; “ when commissioners, in their judgment of heresies, were enjoined to adhere, in the first place, to the authority of the canonical Scriptures ; secondly, to the decisions of the first four general councils ; and thirdly, to the decision of any other general council founded on the express and plain words of holy Scripture.”* Here, it is clear, the Church of England manifests a peculiar respect for the first four councils, which the reader will remember, the Irish Church had received. He will remember also, the reason assigned by Baronius for what he was pleased to call our schism. The Roman Church had received the second synod of Constantinople, the same which she now reverences as the fifth among her general councils, and the Church of Ireland, not satisfied with a silent rejection of its proceedings, not contented to do as has, in later years, been done, with respect to the decrees of Trent, remonstrated with the Roman Church on the impropriety of assenting to its decisions ; and failing in the endeavour to persuade, adopted what the papal historian esteems the rash, and what all will regard as the extreme alternative of separation. It is a memorable coincidence that when England, in the sixteenth century, proceeded to the reformation of her Church, without any reference whatever to the ecclesiastical history of Ireland, but guided by respect for antiquity

* Bishop Jebb's Sermons, Appendix.—*Burnet Hist. of Ref.*

and devotedness to truth, she adopted, we might say precisely the same principle, which, in the sixth age, had been declared and acted on in this once enlightened country.

“Respect for primitive times was shown by the Church of England, not alone in her articles of faith but also in her formularies of devotion. She did not, indeed, gather up such spoils as that besotted Roman Emperor carried back from ocean as the appropriate tribute to his virtues ; and parade the tingling of bells, and the sprinkling of water, and superfluous lights, and the inconvenience of unnecessary censers, as the best legacies antiquity had bequeathed. The Church of England well may yield such honours to those who love to wear them. Let those who list, claim the exclusive glory of imitating ancient times, in particulars which ancient sages have not esteemed worthy of being noticed ; let them boast that their shrines have a more gorgeous embellishment, that their vestments are more curiously embroidered, and that their ceremonies are more cumbrous and more theatrical ; but, to collect from antiquity whatsoever can improve the heart and enlighten the understanding, to be in unison with the primitive Church in reverence for God’s holy Scriptures, to retain those prayers and supplications which were heard from the pious of early times, and which faithfully minister true religion ; to construct a form of public worship which shall consult less for the senses than the understanding, which shall be contrived less for the indulgence of the fancy than the amelioration of the heart, and yet which shall be suitable to all the faculties of man’s nature, and accommodated to all the necessity of his condition, be this the honour of the Church of England, be this her art, these her “barbarous accomplishments.”

The unrivalled authority, observes Bishop Jebb, ascribed by the Church of England to the written

word, is a fact of such notoriety, as to supersede the necessity of express evidence. Her subordinate reverence for pious antiquity, may be less obvious to the superficial observer ; but it admits of no less irrefragable proof.

The liturgy of our Church is a permanent and substantial witness. Regard for ancient faith and piety is manifest in every page, and almost every paragraph of that incomparable work ; derived, as it is, for the most part, from the actual forms, and accordant, as it is, in all parts, with the spirit and feeling, of Christian antiquity. Nor was this derivation and accordance the mere growth of circumstances ; it was the deliberate result of free choice, and discriminative wisdom. In the preface to the Common Prayer, “ concerning the service of the Church,” we are directed “ to search out by the ancient Fathers, for the original and ground of divine service.” And, in the same preface, “ the godly and decent order of the ancient Fathers,” is referred to, as the standard of our worship. But the standard of our worship is, in truth, the standard of our faith. For, we may boldly challenge our adversaries, to produce any one article of our faith, which is not contained in the formularies of our worship, or any one sentence in the formularies of our worship, which is not, in letter, or in spirit, contained in the writings of the ancient Church.”*

* The following extract is from a work, to which it is not becoming that I should offer praise. It has had its honour, and it has experienced the common fate of most modern attempts to assert principles without conciliating party or power :—“ The reign of Edward the Sixth seems to have been intended, principally, to give form and consistency to the new doctrines which had gained, in the preceding reign, considerable strength, though they enjoyed such a limited toleration. As under Henry the circumstances of the times, the character of the prince, and a variety of singular events, gave a direction to the spirit of reformation by which the object to be attained was most likely to be accomplished,—

Thus the Liturgy of the Church of England has been not only an instrument of devotion, but also a guardian of the faith; while the ceremonies which the Church of Rome has substituted in place of prayer, are of a character to admit of so wide a latitude of interpretation, that, as we have already seen, the Ritual which conveyed to the Irish Gentleman the touching story of the early Church, reminding him of night and unwholesome caverns, was intended to signify the death and passion of our Lord Christ, and the

sounder Edward those persons became invested with power, who, by their learning, piety, and the confidence which was reposed in them, were the best qualified for advancing its growth, and conferring upon it that character by which it might be afterwards enabled to outlive the change of times, and to withstand the shock of accident. It is obvious that those forms of worship which are accommodated to the enthusiastic strains of piety in which all new sectaries love to indulge, are little suited to the more subdued and chastened devotion which prevails, after the angry passions, which have been roused up and kept alive by controversy, have been tranquillized, and after the people may have subsided into a greater degree of sober-mindedness. Many feelings, not of a religious nature, enter unawares into the minds of men, who, no matter with what sincerity soever they may be engaged in the search of truth, are opposed to power, undergoing hardships, and sufferings and persecutions; and these they unavoidably communicate to their followers, who thus become filled with a spirit, which, though well calculated at the time for sustaining their faith and disseminating their principles, cannot last longer than the exasperating circumstances which had produced it remain, and must entirely vanish as soon as their religion shall have attained any tolerable degree of composure and stability. It should, therefore, be the object of the wise and enlightened reformer, in embodying a form of prayer which he proposes to be fixed and permanent, to proceed in his work with as little reference as possible to the passions and prejudices of the times. Thus alone can his labours be attended, ultimately, with the requisite success; and thus alone is he likely to attain a truly humble and dutiful expression of Christian feeling."—*Agency of Divine Providence*, p. 60.

Gospel which was preached to all nations. Such diversity of explanation must ever result from framing public prayers in a language not understood of the congregation, and relying on pictures, and gestures, and ceremonies, to convey intelligence of the supplications made, and the mercies commemorated. The Church of Rome is distinguished from all Protestant communions, and opposed to the letter as well as the spirit of God's word, in their appointment of their Latin Mass.

To a reflecting man it will be very difficult to excuse the departure from a Scriptural precept in the adoption of an unknown tongue. He can find no apology for such an adoption in its advantages, and no authority for it in edifying example. It was not in an unknown tongue Christ instructed his disciples, when they besought that he would teach them to pray. It was not an unknown tongue the apostle recommended, when he said, "If I pray in an *unknown* tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unprofited. How is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also." The Scriptures are full of instances in which prayer is recited, as having been uttered by individuals, as addressed by an assembled people—can any instance be produced of prayer made in an unknown tongue, and recommended as a salutary practice? Surely the answer to this question is of no light moment. If, throughout the entire expanse of the Scriptures, amidst the various instances of private and public prayers with which it is illustrated, we find everywhere clear and cogent assurance that effectual petition was breathed out in a language which the suppliant understood, and are instructed, that the only record of prayer in an unknown tongue has been accompanied with a reprobation of the practice—how shall it be maintained that those notions of dignity or convenience which would uphold a system rejected alike by

reason and revelation, are notions which may be retained by those who in the slightest degree respect the authority of man's judgment, or of the Holy Scriptures.

The Church of England, as all Protestant communions, holds, that the prayer of the spirit and the understanding, is the reasonable service which the Lord approves; and cannot discern in the uniformity which ignorance accompanies, or the varieties of thought and opinion to which it affords occasion, anything which can justify or excuse an unauthorized and unprecedented practice. She sees too, as its consequences, evils very deeply to be deplored. She sees, in the compulsory adoption of the Roman tongue, a provision for that "attractive Paganism," by which Christianity has been disfigured; and can well understand how, through its aid, the mythology of Roman poets, and the morals of Roman philosophers may have insensibly chequered the purity of Christian doctrine, and vitiated the excellence of Christian precepts. She can understand how idolatry, conquered and put down from its high places, may have retained the virulence of its animosity against pure religion, and, unable to combat in open war, studied cunning devices, and waged its language against the cross. By this artifice, the great mass of mankind became excluded from the benefits of public prayer; by this, Christian truth became corrupted in heathen exposition, and men were persuaded to believe that a form daily repeated—originally a representation rendered necessary by the employment of a strange tongue, was in power and mystery, no less awful and appalling than that stupendous sacrifice of which it was a memorial. Let any member of the Church of Rome seriously reflect on the Missal and the Book of Common Prayer, and declare which is "the reasonable service." But, perhaps too much has been said on a practice which admits not of defence. The silence

of the Irish Gentleman, his inability to extort a testimony in favour of this abomination, has left prayer in an unknown tongue, "a forsaken cause" which requires no formal condemnation.

"The Liturgy of our Church is a permanent and substantial witness." This is a very important point of view in which the formularies of religion should be regarded. Articles of subscription serve to the same end, providing that, where there is honesty of intention, there shall be correspondence of character between the doctrines to be believed and the heart and understanding which are to receive them. It is sometimes said, that it would be quite sufficient to require the agreement of a minister to one or two leading points of faith, and leave him a Christian freedom of election in all matters of minor importance. But this so called freedom may be extremely injurious to both minister and congregation. There is, perhaps, no great truth which is not affected by considerations which, to the superficial, seem unconnected with it. Those who have reflected much on the operations of their minds, are conscious that almost every important thought has, as it were, some satellites which never fail to accompany it; and, although the connection may not be at first apparent, yet the constant recurrence of some of the secondary ideas when the principal has been remembered, and of the primary, when the subordinate notions present themselves, shows that they all constitute one system. In religious doctrine, it will not be denied by the reflecting, that articles of the first importance are intimately concerned in matters of seemingly little moment, and that the interests of a great truth may be very seriously prejudiced by false notions respecting some of its dependancies so remote as to be thought wholly unconnected with it. The articles serve as warnings to mark out the space within which it is safe and profitable to have the mind employed. The Church of England re-

quires that its ministers shall understand and believe them. It thus endeavours to ascertain what manner of men shall be entrusted with its high commission, and to secure the species of instruction which its children are to receive. He who reflects upon the Articles of the Church of England will see, that, even in the less obviously important, they are well contrived to guard the great doctrines of faith; and he will, it is probable, find reason to believe that truths of the utmost moment may be lost, by the corruption of apparently unconnected principles, with no less certainty than the interests of a great nation may suffer by the destruction of her colonies.

The evils which have arisen, from the want of some species of subscription, are too numerous and too well known to need a comment. The notorious fact that a minister, and almost his entire congregation, have differed upon essential points of Christian faith, and have maintained their connection, because it was not necessary that the teacher should make public profession of his belief, is quite sufficient to show the security which may be afforded in that public recital of a formulary of belief, which constitutes an essential part of the Church of England service. But, it may be asked, why require more—why compel the minister to assent more solemnly than the members of his congregation to Articles not of sufficient magnitude to have a place in our creeds? The subscription of the minister is required, because he is to instruct; because it is necessary not only that he preach the great truths of the Gospel, but that he preach nothing alien, nothing derogatory thereto; and this, it is probable, he might do, if he were a person incapable of understanding the Articles of the Church of England, or, if he disregarded the directions and the warnings they are well calculated to convey to him.

By means of the Liturgy, the public service, in which it is impossible for both minister and congre-

gation to be deceived, (by which, indeed, it is provided, that, whatever the minister be, he must declare the doctrine of the Church,) the permanence, as it has been wisely observed, of our Church system has been studiously cared for. It may be added, that, in the sermon, necessary to complete our public formularies of devotion, provision is made that the Church shall keep pace with the advance of society; the minister being stimulated by the exactments of a public and periodical duty, to order his studies and his habits of thinking, so as that all his faculties and arguments shall be dedicated to the great object of illustrating Christian truth and exemplifying the efficacy of the Church in which he is a teacher.

Thus, it may be said, is Mr. Coleridge's noble idea of a perfect system realized in the structure of the Church of England. It has been careful of the two essential principles, permanency and progression. With sufficient power of accommodation to the necessities which may arise, or the changes which may take place in society as knowledge advances, it is effectually guarded against such concession, to the caprices of a fickle people, or the circumstances of a difficult period, as might cause it to lose its distinctive character, and forfeit its independent station. Against all departures from the principle of the Church, the book of Common Prayer will be "a permanent and substantial witness;" and while each minister in the Church of England collects the lights of modern art and literature, to illustrate and recommend the sacred truths he is privileged to declare, the liturgy, by which, in part, his mind has been formed, is a link of association with early times, and causes our Church to be at the present day, with such accommodations as altered circumstances demand, the same that it was in the times of Polycarp or Irenæus.

The Church of Rome, with all its boastful pretensions, has no such accommodation to present times,

and no such carefulness for the doctrines and practices of antiquity.

Its character is such, that as knowledge increases, it must decline. Most consistently, therefore, it pronounces that the reason of its votaries shall not be free, and that the noblest faculties of the human mind must toil in a condition which, if they were indulged with the slave's hope, might be compared to that of the wretched diamond searchers, to whom the costliness of the splendid productions for which they painfully explore, renders the tyranny which encloses them more cruel, and the suspicion under which they ply their miserable task, more vigilant and hateful. They, however, have a hope that they may discover the gem of great price, and be made free; but the slave of Rome cannot call his friends and neighbours to rejoice with him. He calls down a curse as he essays to go forth, and, if power second the will of the despotism which would coerce him, the efforts to detain or destroy will not be confined to the launching of spiritual maledictions.

But, it has been said that the Church of England is a partaker in the iniquity of uncharitable denunciations. She has adopted the Athanasian Creed, and while she makes open profession that none who disbelieve the doctrine declared in that confession of faith, can be saved, she ought to be regarded as no less uncharitable and presumptuous than the Church which receives the Creed of Pius IV.

The cases are different. The utmost that can be charged upon the Athanasian Creed is, that it pronounces as essential to salvation those great doctrines which the great majority of Christian congregations hold. There is some difference between this, and the invoking condemnation on all who will not receive *all* the articles of *all* the general councils, Lateran and Constance inclusive; who will not receive traditions of which they know not the nature or name;

who will not swear true obedience to a potentate towards whom the character of true obedience has never yet been ascertained; who will not, in short, undertake to receive whatever, as an object of faith, his Church may propose to them. There surely is difference here, even supposing the charge against the Church of England substantiated to its full extent.

In the second place, a difference must be acknowledged between the language of caution and that of malediction. The Church of Rome says, whosoever will not believe this let him be accursed—*Anathema esto*. The Church of England prays for all heretics and schismatics, but at the same time delivers the warning, that certain doctrines are to be received as necessary to salvation. But why does she utter such a warning? * Because otherwise she would not be a faithful Church, the Church of Christ. He uttered a warning when he commissioned his Apostles to teach. Were they to declare the doctrine, and suppress the lawful sanction by which it is to be enforced, they would have executed but half the duty assigned to them. Christ said, he that believeth not shall be damned; it is not true charity which, through fear of encountering the censure of superficial minds, or disturbing the repose of indifferent, would shrink from the solemn duty of pronouncing the whole truth as it is in Jesus, and being faithful ministers of him who would not break the bruised

* That our blessed Lord himself annexed a warning to the commission he gave the apostles should lead us to believe, that he will make it possible for all who come within the reach of instruction to believe in doctrines which are necessary not only because of positive precept but for their salutary influence on the soul. The reasoning of superficial men is, condemnation should not be annexed to, perhaps unavoidable, unbelief. The more correct inference would be, condemnation has been pronounced upon unbelief, therefore God will make belief attainable.

reed nor quench the smoking flax, but who would have souls awakened to a sense of their everlasting interests by all the motives, fear as well as hope and love, of which our natures are susceptible.

In truth the only question which should be proposed respecting the cautions with which a Church may declare her doctrines is this ; are they so applied as the head and founder of the Church directed. Let the Church of England be tried by this test, and the warning by which she bespeaks attention to the great doctrines of the Catholic Faith will no longer be confounded or classed with the Anathemas by which the Church of Rome reprobates all dissent from the creed of Pope Pius. In a word, the caution which the Church of England addresses is applied to the enunciation of the same doctrines to which the head of the Church applied it, and is to be understood in the same sense and with the same qualifications.*

It will be admitted by all who reflect, that the case

* That the Church of England is merely the faithful minister in pronouncing her warnings, may be readily understood by any one who will reflect on our Lord's commission to the apostles, as given in the concluding chapters of the Gospels according to St. Matthew and St. Mark. It is evident, that, in both, the same discourse is related ; each Evangelist relating some one part more fully than the other. It is not, therefore, incorrect to read thus :

St. Matthew, xxviii. 19. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

St. Mark, xvi. 16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

It might, perhaps, be well had these Scriptural expressions been read in the place of the present preamble of the Athanasian Creed. The creed itself, (which is an exposition of the Faith,) is comprehended between the words "The Catholic faith is this" and "This is the Catholic faith ;" and the verses of Scripture might, perhaps with advantage, be substituted for the expressions which at present precede and follow the Confession of Faith.

of that Church which warns in charity and truth where our Lord himself had uttered a solemn caution, is very different from that of the Church which pronounces a malediction, if, in the most trivial particular of her peculiar creed, she experience dissent or doubt. Other distinctions no less remarkable, and scarcely less favourable to the Church of England, will also present themselves to those, who, with the most ordinary attention, look for truth; for example, the Church of Rome, boasting her infallibility, cannot refer her children or her adversaries to a single document in which her faith is authoritatively declared. She is like a bankrupt who cannot produce his books, and should not be free from the suspicion which such an evidence of unfairness is accounted to justify. The Church of England, it is unnecessary to say, makes her profession and formulary of faith and worship public. The Church of Rome (however difficulty of circumstances or individual benevolence may have inconsistently relaxed the prohibition) straitly forbids the Bible to her children. The Church of England, even in her public devotions, as if she would always have the rule of God's word before her, makes the reading of Scripture a main part of her forms of worship. But it is unnecessary to continue; the Church of Rome denies the right of private judgment; the Church of England educates and assists the faculties which God has given; the Church of England prays for and cautions those who disbelieve the great truths of religion; the Church of Rome curses all who will not receive her dogmas with implicit reverence. The Church of England proposes her belief openly and with authority, so as that all men may say, thus and thus hath she taught; this is the Church of England. The Church of Rome makes no such profession; she resides with infallibility; and infallibility has never condescended to manifest its presence in any accredited form of be-

lief; she offers individual testimony, contradictory opinions; and has no uniformity except in the belief that all must be damned who dare to judge for themselves. Such is the Church of Rome; a monstrous nightmare, without form or consistence, whose power is in the stagnation of abused human faculties, not in its own strength or subtlety; and which, if the judgment or the will can make but a single exertion to discover that horror of thick darkness, or cast off that fell oppression, disperses and leaves its victim free.

“The Church of England,” it has been well said, “has always been more anxious to maintain a unity of spirit in the bond of peace, than a unity of profession in the bond of ignorance. She knows that the diversities, apparent in the protestant community, *are the diversities discovered by light*; and that the uniformity presented in the Roman Catholic Church *is an uniformity occasioned by darkness*. She can no more on that account prefer popery to protestantism than she can prefer night to day.”

“The Church of England loves order and discipline, but dislikes constraint and persecution. She would maintain her influence not by terror but by love. Hers is a mild and gentle sway; and she aims at no more than inspiring her children with a free and filial obedience. Our Lord has himself used the comparison of a hen extending her wings over her callow brood, to express the concern which he felt for the Jewish people, and the tender protection which he would have afforded them against impending calamities if they had hearkened to his voice. The same may be used to express the feelings with which the Church of England regards not only those who come to, and remain with, but those who leave her. Although she cannot love them *all as her own*, or see, without anxiety, some go to the woods and some to the water, yet she regrets not, on that account, having afforded them the fostering warmth

whereby they were quickened into life; and she is comforted by the persuasion, that although they have ceased to have her for their mother, they have not *therefore* ceased to have God for their father; and that, in many instances, those whom she has lost on earth she will find in heaven.”*

But we are not required to believe that our Church is absolutely perfect. On the contrary, we are incited, by a sense of human infirmity, to be perpetually on our guard against those circumstances in the shifting changes of society which may impair its utility, and to use our utmost endeavours that its advantages may be as great as its soundness is approved or its excellence undoubted.

“Should it hereafter be the duty of any among my hearers to minister in country parishes, small experience will be sufficient to convince them, that this picture is not overcharged, that the standard of our Liturgical service is far above the average moral level of the country, of the Protestants of the country; that its conceptions are too pure, its fervours too chaste, its whole spirit too calm and elevated, to be discerned by the rude or relished by the carnal. What, then—shall we lower our Liturgy to the taste of the multitude? God forbid. On the contrary, we must apply ourselves with all anxious diligence to elevate the public mind up to the Liturgy and the Church.”†

Such is the language of one who was well ranked among the most distinguished of modern divines. How desirable that the wisdom of his precepts were realized in practice. Modern notions of reform are of a directly opposite character. They are, to accommodate the Church to the caprices of the times, instead of endeavouring to recommend it to the rea-

* Observations occasioned by the letter of J. K. L.

† Remains of Doctor Phelan.

son of an instructed people. Is there a hope that suggestions of a different species of reform may be heard, and that, amidst present clamours, attention can be gained to the consideration of a particular in which the interests of Church and people have been neglected, and to (what scarcely needs a formal statement, if the evil be confessed,) the proposal of a remedy.

The Church which acknowledges the right of private judgment is especially bound to satisfy that judgment, the exercise of which it encourages. It is not very surprising that this obligation should not have always been present to the minds of those who govern in our Church, and that their admiration for the form of sound words, of which they understood the excellence, indisposed them to feel the necessity of providing for the great mass of the people such assistance as should enable *them also* to appreciate the Liturgy. The Church of England, in its public forms, is not more distinguished from some communions by its uniformity of prayer, than it should be from the Church of Rome by the variety which may be found in its forms of exhortation. Abstaining in its public prayer from those occasional and incidental references which may serve to excite attention, it possesses in the discourse, without which the Sabbath service is incomplete, provision for explaining the character of its worship and its creed, and showing how admirably it is accommodated to the wants of man, and in how faithful subserviency it acts to the lessons of our blessed Redeemer.

Thus, the Church of England is especially and pre-eminently a preaching Church. She has given up, on the one hand, the sights and sounds, the dogmas and the practices, by which the Church of Rome upholds her influence. On the other hand, she has denied to her ministers and members the advantages which may be found in great diversity and incidental

applications. What has she taken instead? A uniform system of prayer, to guard against the evils of inconsiderate variety; a reasonable service in a known tongue, and "the foolishness of preaching," to set men's minds on right things, and preclude the perils with the advantages of appliances which might cause the thoughts of a congregation to centre within their Church, rather than be uplifted to Him for whose service the Church was appointed.

Can any reflecting man look upon the actual workings of the Church of England, without becoming persuaded, that, in no particular has she made less provision for the discharge of a most important duty, than in the department of preaching. Perhaps there never was, at any period of modern times, indeed of any times, a more exemplary and excellent body of men than the parochial clergy of Ireland. Their knowledge, their benevolence, and the purity of their lives, needs not my feeble eulogy. They have had their praise where praise is fame, and needed not that the "splendour of adversity" should be cast upon them, to render their excellence still more conspicuous. But while the merits of the parish ministers have won strong attestations, it must be confessed, that the circumstances in which they are placed are not of that character which favours their endeavours to render the Church a great instrument of public good, by the efficacy of their preaching.

It is absolutely necessary, here, to direct a brief attention to the distribution of Church property, because much of efficiency of any system must depend on the manner in which its revenues are applied. Perhaps the first observation that occurs to one who looks upon the statistics of the Church in Ireland is, that the towns appear to have been regarded as of less consequence than the rural districts, in the provision made for their religious instruction. While the incomes of many of the parochial clergy in the country

are not certainly above the deserts of those by whom they are held, they would seem to have but little reference to their peculiar exigencies. It is, undoubtedly, an anomaly, that ecclesiastical property shall be so distributed, as that, in almost all the towns, where calls upon the charity of individuals are so frequent, and where the necessary expenses of living are considerable, the income of the minister of religion shall be such, as, to a man born and educated as the clergy of the Church generally are, must be scanty. In consequence, the course of promotion is, from the duties of a town life, to retirement in the country. In this it may be said, the evil is not apparent; but, if it be taken into account, that the congregation of a town is not that which should be left dependant on the instructions of a young person, one whose character and habits of thought have not yet been formed; and who, with the natural extravagance of youth, is perhaps studious of ornament, and ambitious of producing strong excitement, rather than earnest in advancing those sober truths, the moment of which, it may be, maturity of life can alone bring with it the power of understanding, the inference will not be deemed unreasonable that the endowments of a town parish should be such as would in all likelihood, insure to it the religious instruction and superintendence of one who had reached the full stature of mental growth, and who was at liberty, without distraction of thought or too great variety of duties, to give himself up to the advocacy and elucidation of Christian doctrine.

The condition of the clergy in our great towns, then, if a real reformation be desired in the Church, should be carefully sought out and examined. It will be found that the natural influences have had their effect in the instance of every other body of ministers, and that the Church of Rome as well as the various congregations of dissenters, have their best

endowments where the highest order of services is most needed. The Church of England has not been careful to make similar provision.

In the next place, it is very desirable, that, in some particular instances, there should be a separation made between the duties of a preacher, and those of the parish minister. It is essential that facilities should be afforded for the cultivation and exercise of talents, from which, under good government, the cause of religion and order would derive even more benefit, than from their exercise under less favourable circumstances it is likely to take hurt. The influence of a wise, and earnest, and attractive discourse, can scarcely be too highly estimated; and those who are desirous to see the best interests of religion advanced, may understand what an auxiliary they would have in the sober eloquence of wisdom, if they will but reflect upon the nature of the human heart, and see how much damage a good cause has sustained from inconsiderate but attractive declamation. The ministers of the Church of England in large towns, engaged in absorbing and fatiguing duties, have little time to prepare for a task which is not to be accounted light; namely, the conveying to a diversified congregation, the instruction upon which many may, perhaps, be altogether dependant for their religious knowledge. Such circumstances are not favourable to the developement of the excellencies of the Church. Surely they ought to be amended.

In truth, it is in towns, now especially, the efficacy of the Church of England should be felt and exhibited. There was a time when the rural population constituted the great strength of the nation, and demanded the most attention. Peace, and war, and commerce, have produced great alterations; and masses of men have become congregated in towns, who are brought more under the excitement of novel influences, and who are more disposed for change.

If the Church of England had been observant of this alteration during its progress, and supplied those who had crowded into the moral wilderness of commerce and manufactures, with the living bread which sustains spiritual life, the character of society would not wear the aspect which it has, unhappily, assumed ; and if, even now, an effort be made to remedy the neglect, which has become so apparent in its disastrous consequences, a blessing will come upon the good endeavour, and God will grant a mitigation of evil.

CONCLUDING ADDRESS TO THE ROMAN CATHOLIC READER.

You who have journeyed with me over the weary and rugged road through which it was my office to be your guide, bear with me, if, in parting, I address you with a brief word of Christian exhortation. You are yet free to determine a matter in which your eternal welfare is involved. Use your diligence; be fervent in prayer, that you may determine wisely. You are passing through this life rapidly—you know not at what moment your course may be ended, and your light extinguished. Avail yourselves of the accepted time which God has given, and study to learn *His* will, who may, you know not in what moment, summon you to his judgment.

You are taught to believe that Christ founded a Church on earth, and communicated to it the promise of a glorious inheritance. You learn that two systems, strikingly contrasted with each other, claim, each, the glory of being the Church of which the Lord of Life is the head—that one of these makes its appeal to the Word of God, and directs you to satisfy yourself *there* as to “what is truth”—that the other puts that word away from you, and ordains that you shall seek no farther than *her own word*, because God hath bestowed upon her the privilege that she cannot err. Will you be contented to receive, without inquiry, the professions of the one Church or the other,—will you not give time and thought, and that earnestness of inquiry which puts passion and prejudice aside, and be diligent to find the ancient paths in which the followers of Jesus walked, and in which

all who enter shall find peace? Remember that the only great object you should propose to yourself here on earth, is, that you may hereafter enter heaven. Do you provide most carefully for this, by consenting to give up the endowment by which, according to God's appointment, you are distinguished from the things that perish?

Do you, as a member of the Church of Rome, believe that God has set up, on this earth, a light which cannot mislead—has established a tribunal, from whose decisions He will not hear an appeal? If you do, must you not—at least *ought* you not, in the same proportion as you desire God's favour, be solicitous to obtain the guidance, and to yield yourself to the authority by which it is his will you should be ordered and directed? Are you sure that the Church of Rome rightfully challenges or claims as her own, this divine authority? What are the grounds of your assurance? Her dauntless assertions? They are not more daring than his were to be, whom the Apostle prophetically terms “son of perdition,” and who yet was “to sit as God, even in the Temple of God.” The boast of the Roman Church cannot be prouder, the assumption more daring, than that of him whose coming, nevertheless, was to be after the manner of Satan. Will you then believe, on no other evidence than unsupported assertion, that God hath imparted to the Church of which you are a member, a portion of that attribute in which, your own reason, as far as you venture to use it, must strongly admonish you, nothing created can participate! Will you, in this instance, abandon the principle which, upon every other occasion of your life, exercises strong influence over you? Is there not, in all cases, an implied engagement on the part of him who brings strange tidings, that, in the same proportion as the demand on the credulity of his hearers is startling, so shall the evidence be con-

straining, by which he maintains his claim to be believed? Is it a moderate claim for any establishment upon this earth to set up, that, upon important matters, it cannot err,—that, in a fallen world—constituted of fallen materials—tempted within, assaulted from without, by all vice and ungodliness, it has yet preserved the deposit of the faith so pure, that whatsoever it defines, declares, and decrees, must be received with an obedience prompt as we are bound to yield to the word of the living God? Is this a moderate claim? Infallibility!!! I beseech you to take counsel of your reason. Is there aught in which you feel the omnipotent Jehovah more peculiarly distinguished from the creatures he hath made, than in this attribute, which the Church of Rome challenges as her own? It is the condition of man to be liable to error; and, so far as human agency is necessary to the administration of the holiest institution, so far exposure to error must be experienced. Is it, then, an ordinary demand upon you, to believe that the Church of Rome has been exempted from this liability, and that the accusations of history against her, proclaiming that she has been perfidious, unholy, cruel, should have no effect in lessening the cordiality of your assent to the asseveration, that nevertheless, she is infallible? Is this a moderate claim? Is it safe, without evidence, to receive it? Do you require proof even for the existence of God? Will you, without proof, believe that he has made the Church of Rome partaker in his infallibility?

If you are among those who, without proof or examination, receive as truth, the declarations of the Roman Church, it is, be assured of very great moment, that you search diligently, within your heart, the motives by which you have been affected. Some natures acquiesce in dogmas against which reason would revolt, rather than tax their faculties with the labour of patient deliberation; and are willing to ac-

cede to the most extravagant pretensions of the most aspiring Church, rather than be at the pains of examining whether these pretensions appear just, according to the light by which God has enabled them to discriminate truth from falsehood. It has, also, frequently happened, that individuals thus easy with respect to their admission of spiritual claims, are, by no means, indifferent, in things relating to temporal advantage. As to the promise of future felicity; as to the menace of the judgment; as to the way and the truth; the resurrection and the life; all that concerns man, in his relation to a spiritual world, they are not very scrupulous in determining upon whom their reliance should be reposed; but, if a confidence is demanded, by which their worldly interests may, in aught, be compromised, they will exercise no ordinary diligence, and, if the affair be of importance, will not suffer their eyes to take rest, while occupied in the interesting inquiry where they should place their trust. Is the heart of a man set on right things whose feelings are such towards heaven and towards the world? What, do you imagine, does God expect of his creatures? Even if you are uninstructed by the Bible, may not human reason teach you that he demands not alone obedience to a law obtruded on them, but, also, a solicitude to learn his will as well as to do it? And, if there be found men, knowing themselves dependant on the divine mercy for every blessing which they possess, and, yet, indisposed to examine whether God has established a rule by the observance of which they may prove themselves not ungrateful; if they are very watchful that their fellow-men should fail in no point of service or respect *to them*, while they are altogether careless, whether unto God shall be rendered the honour which is *his* due; if, because a Church declare itself commissioned to exact and receive a tribute which (apparently) should be yielded only to our Almighty author,

a pretext be afforded them for indulging the indolence of corrupt nature, and occasion seized for profaning a divine honour, do you imagine that an unreasoning acquiescence in such a claim is a slight or pardonable error of the judgment?

Could the enemy of souls devise a more effectual means of upholding his dominion, than the setting up of an establishment, whatever it might be, which should serve to engage and attach to itself the reverence belonging to the Lord! I am not now speaking of the character of the Church of Rome. Our considerations are, for the present, limited to the carefulness with which she would prevent her character from being examined. But, I repeat my question; could Satan provide for himself a more useful support than in the establishment of an institution which should profess to be of God, and yet prohibit men from learning what God had taught? The prince of the powers of darkness dare not, in his own undisguised nature, seek proselytes upon the earth; but, if he can succeed, in turning sinners from the path which leads to peace, if he can withdraw creatures sick unto death from the blessed region where the sun of righteousness shineth, and where the gales are airs of healing, if he can procure for the germ of decay in the inner man, unmolested power and scope to mature its withering energy; if he can lead from a system of which God is the life, and detain the ransomed of the Lord amidst superstitions which counterfeit divine mysteries, and under the government of a pride which challenges adoration as its right, has he not as surely made a prey of the lost and rejected beings whom he has enthralled, as if, at his first approach, they viewed the ruler of fallen angels and worshipped him as their God?

You owe it to your hopes of eternal life, and, if you love the Church of Rome, you owe it to her, to ascertain the warranty for her doctrines and preten-

sions. You owe it to her, so far as you have power, to ascertain this, not learning merely from her unaccredited statements, but examining the evidence to which she refers, and examining, with equal carefulness, the evidence offered by those who assert that she would detain you in dangerous and deadly error. As you would not then, in heedlessness, make shipwreck of your soul—as you would not have claims which might, perhaps, derive support from God's word, received without examination and defended without authority—and, above all, as you would not rashly accuse the Divine Majesty of having seduced you into error, imputing to the Holy Spirit, the evils of your own ignorance and supineness; judge for yourselves, whether the Church of Rome teach the truth.

Protestants affirm, upon the authority of the divine word, that she hath corrupted the truth; that her doctrines are false—her practices unholy—and that her ambition is the ambition of him who, for his pride, was cast out of heaven. We affirm, that, however moderated expression may disguise the enormity of most arrogant pretensions, the authority which the Church of Rome demands to herself, is no less than a divided empire with the Creator and Saviour of the world. In what spirit will you hear our accusations made? In anger? If we speak without evidence, we do indeed richly merit the censure which should be severely visited on rash and indecent declamation; but, if we speak the truth!—Oh that you may know—hear what we have to say with patience—fortify yourself with all the knowledge which you can call in to the aid of your cherished prepossessions, but, at the same time, as you are not dedicated to the cause of your Church but to the cause of God, as you have not devoted yourself to an eternal alliance with any system which the Gospel light may expose as an impure and idolatrous worship—do not

reject the testimony of even gainsayers, if, opposed though it be to your prejudices, it is found, on examination, conformable to your reason. Let the words of God himself have influence with you—"stand ye in the ways," be found in the places where knowledge may be obtained—be engaged in the pursuits which are in themselves salutary, and whose end is truth. "Ask for the old paths." Yes, "the old paths"—the paths wherein Christ taught his disciples to walk—the paths which the early Christians, amidst all the fierceness of fiery persecutions, found to be the paths of pleasantness. Ask for those old paths—to which the Church of Rome boasts she alone can conduct you—the paths, in which she declares that she has always accustomed her children to walk, while yet she has not scrupled to call up around them an atmosphere impermeable to the blessed light of the Gospel. Yes: ask for the old paths, and if you find the illustrious men, the martyrs, the confessors of purer days, the testimony of holy Scripture, the deductions of human reason—if you find what is clearest in God's word—what is best in man—the venerable sanction of antiquity—the lights of cultivated times—guiding you to paths which yet you have not known; and if, on the other hand, the Church of Rome should only be able to interpose against all such solemn and cogent appeals, her solitary warning, her unholy malediction—what will you say? will you continue in darkness? or, will you come where the united energies of whatever is good, whatever is pure, and whatever is of good report unceasingly attract you?

But, it is said, the old paths are those to which the Church of Rome conducts. I implore God's grace that, if they be, you may continue in them;—but whatever they be, let not your continuance be the result of accident or indifference. If you have not *examined*, you have not *chosen*. The act of parents and

friends has introduced you to the Church of Rome. In their decision, without inquiry or knowledge, you have acquiesced. Convert your acquiescence into deliberate choice, or exchange it for the rejection of detected error. Whether the Church of Rome be sound or corrupt, your attachment to her cannot be praiseworthy, unless it imply that you *have examined*, and that you approve her. The word of God commands, that you *ask* for the old paths. It is not sufficient, it is not a compliance with his command, that you should merely *walk* in them. In the name then of Him who has thus commanded; ask for the old paths; ask, are the paths in which your steps have been conversant, those old good ways in which God has commanded you to walk; ask how you have endeavoured to ascertain that they are. If you obtain an answer by which your conscience is satisfied; if you have sought, and sought as God directs, and if your search has ended in a full and clear conviction, that you know all the doctrines of the Church of Rome; all the paths to which she directs; and that all are holy and good; pray that you may have grace to manifest the pureness of your faith in pureness of living, and that those who are without may see your good works and glorify God. But, if doubt cause itself to be felt within you; if your search has not been diligent or well directed; if you know not all the mysteries and labyrinths of the Roman Church, or, have discovered in it what God's word has forbidden, pray that you may be assisted in your further inquiries. Let your doubts be tried by the test of God's holy word, not resisted and subdued by blind obstinacy of purpose. Do not reject even the assistances offered in the preceding pages. Let the plain statements they contain be compared with the articles and arguments of the Church of which you are now a member. Let the entire controversy be compared with a still holier standard. If

the examination of the important topics which have been here imperfectly discussed, be undertaken in a suitable spirit, the result is not matter of uncertainty. I have no fear while I pray for your success. May God cause the truth to prevail with you—may a divine benediction be sent down upon your labours—may your inquiries be so guided as to lead you into all truth—and may you be blessed with such a thorough and a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, in all meekness and humility, you will follow him through the old paths—the good way—the way of peace—into the mansions where his disciples shall be made like unto him, and shall know him as he is.

APPENDIX I.

“I profess that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the new law, instituted by our Lord,” &c. &c.—*Creed of Pius IV.*

ST. AUGUSTINE, Epist. ad Januar.

“Our Lord has placed us under an easy yoke, whence by sacraments very few (*paucissimis*) in number, very easy in observance, most excellent in signification, he hath bound together the society of his new people—as is Baptism consecrated in the name of the Trinity—the communion of his body and blood—and if there be anything else commanded in the *Canonical Scriptures*.”

IN JOHAN.

“From his side, pierced with a spear as he hung on the cross, *the Sacraments of the Church* flowed forth.”

Let him sleep in death—let his side be opened—and let the Virgin Church come forth, that as Eve was formed from the side of sleeping Adam, so the Church also may be formed from the side of Christ hanging on the Cross. His side was wounded, according to the Gospels, and immediately came thereout water and blood—water in which the spouse is purified, blood from which she is dowried.

CHRYSOSTOM, Hom. 84. in Johan.

“For there came forth water and blood. Not casually and without meaning did these fountains issue forth—but because of *the two*, the Church is constituted. The initiated know this—for by water they are regenerated; in the blood and flesh they are nourished. Hence the Sacraments have their origin—that as often as you come to the sacred chalice, you come as if to drink from the side.”

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA.

“Whence blood mingled with water issued forth, and was, as it were, a certain image and primitiæ of the mystical eucharist and holy baptism.”

AMBROSE

Has written a treatise on the Sacraments, which consists of discourses on Baptism and the Lord's Supper. His tacit rejection of the five Romish additions is the more remarkable, from the circumstance of his having written a treatise on penance, or repentance.

EUCCHARIST.

Travels of an Irish Gentleman, p. 162, Vol. I. from Cyril of Jerusalem—“The bread and wine, which, before the invocation of the adorable Trinity, were nothing but bread and wine, became, after this invocation, the body and blood of Christ.” Such is the Irish Gentleman's citation. Cyril wrote—“For as the bread and wine,” &c. &c. “so, in like manner, these meats of the pomps of Satan are in their own nature pure, but by invocation of dæmons are rendered impure.”

That is to say, the change which takes place in the elements is of the same kind with that which is effected in meats offered to idols; the *substance* of the latter (and therefore of the former) remaining, the *qualities* of each being altered.

Let this serve as a sample of the disingenuousness or the indiscretion with which the Irish Gentleman quotes, and let one instance spare the necessity of further similar exposure.

CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, Com. in Johan. C. 6.

“From your thoughts, I discern, he said, that, without understanding, you think this earthly body has been said to be, in its nature, vivifying. But this is not the scope of my words, for *all my discourse* to you is *concerning the divine spirit* and life everlasting.”

Thus Cyril, who, in the former part of his commentary on the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, wrote in terms from which the advocate of Transubstantiation might have quoted, here explains his preceding observations, in

such a manner as to prove that he fully assented to such a canon of interpretation as that which St. Augustine proposed. Cyril of Alexandria seems to have written in more forcible language, respecting the Eucharist, than any of his cotemporaries. His mind, constantly occupied in his controversy with Nestorius, finding, in the doctrine of the Eucharist, an argument which had much power against his adversary, his language, naturally, was more forcible than, under other circumstances, it would have been; but it was sufficiently guarded by occasional explanations, such as made known the character of his observations on St. John. The Irish Gentleman has quoted what he calls a declaration of Cyril's on the Eucharist, which was approved by the Council of Ephesus. Here there are two mistakes. Cyril's was not a declaration of the doctrine of the Eucharist—it was an argumentum ad hominem employed against Nestorius, and one in which the doctrine, received in a figurative or a literal interpretation, would be equally effective. In the second place, it does not appear that there was any approval whatever by the Council. On the contrary, the passage from Cyril is found in Labbe and Cossart, among the things which were transacted before the meeting of the Council—"Qua continentur ea quæ synodum antecesserunt."

JEROME, COM. in Eccl.

"This is our only real good in the present life, if we feed on the flesh of Christ, and drink his blood, *not only in the Sacrament, but also in the reading of the Holy Scriptures.*"

ORIGEN DE RECTA FIDE.

"But if, as they say, he had not flesh and blood, of what flesh or of what blood, giving bread and the cup *as types*, did he command the disciples, through them, to commemorate him."

THE SAXON HOMILY FOR EASTER (10 Century).

"By virtue of the Word of God, it is truly his body and blood; yet not *corporally*, but *spiritually*."

I shall not occupy more space with superfluous quotations, but would venture to express a hope, that the copious and valuable selections which Mr. Finch has made, and of which he has bestowed some copies on his friends, he would indulge the public, and benefit a great cause, by allowing to be more largely distributed.

In the text I have cited a passage from one of Dr. Phelan's admirable discourses. I cannot deny my reader the gratification he will derive from perusing an ampler extract.

"It has been said, that no great and good man ever despaired of the fortunes of human kind. And of all men, those admirable persons who conducted our Reformation, were, perhaps, least influenced by any such despondency. They executed their task, in the fulness of faith, and even amidst the concussions of this tempestuous season, there are not a few signs, that all things are now working together, for the consummation which they anticipated. Their labours were calculated, prophetically calculated, for an advanced stage of human society: not merely for a stage, in which the arts of life, and the refinements of secular literature, have been brought to a high polish; but for a stage, in which the capabilities of man, in the fulness of his nature, as a being favoured to associate with angels, and to hold high communion with his God, are expanded and matured. As this mysterious nature is more fully explored, as that kingdom of Christ, for which we daily pray, more visibly approaches, in the same proportion, will the devotional forms of our Church be more duly appreciated. But in the mean time, it has to struggle against many difficulties, because it will not descend to unworthy arts of popularity. It does not solicit, it does not acknowledge, except for the purpose of purifying or condemning them, any of the meaner principles of our nature. It has no ceremonial pantomime, to entertain the senses; no spell of shadowy terrors, to fascinate the will; no fanaticism, to agitate the sterner passions of the soul. It does not prophecy smooth things, or cry peace where there is no peace; it does not flatter the selfishness of the heart, by preaching a monopoly of divine favour; it does not practise on the foolish pride of reason, by the introduction of local or incidental topics. Thus, it has less in common with grosser minds, than, perhaps, any other form of Christianity in the world. It must struggle against nearly the same obstacles, as the Gospel itself; against slowness of heart, darkness of intellect, torpor of conscience, to some appearing a stumbling-block; to others, foolishness."

APPENDIX II.

THE reader has seen many instances of the manner in which the Fathers have been, by a process of torture, constrained to testify to what, in their hearts, they abhorred. The kindness of a learned friend, the Rev. Charles Minchin, has supplied me with an instance of singular practising on the testimonies of divines of the Church of England. "The testimonies of Hooker and Jeremy Taylor on this subject," observes the Editor of the *Irish Gentleman's Travels*, "though well known, are of too much importance not to be added to the above authorities. *I wish, says Hooker, men would give themselves more time to meditate with silence on what we have in the sacrament, and less to dispute the manner how. Sith we all agree that Christ by the sacrament doth really and truly perform in us his promise, why do we vainly trouble ourselves with so fierce contentions, whether by consubstantiation or else transubstantiation? Ecclesiastical Polity.*"

In this passage, as quoted by the *Irish Gentleman*, there are, as it would seem, two sentences each of them complete, and the entire appearing one continuous extract. The reader who wishes to verify the quotation will find, by referring to the Fifth Book of Hooker's *Ecclesiastical Polity*, that it consists of two fragments of sentences, one of which he will find at page 286, Vol. II. of the London edition, 1830, and the other, separated by three pages of close print at 289, the interval being occupied by explanations which leave it impossible to misunderstand the meaning of the expressions which "the Travels" have recited. For example, the following sentence which is found a little before the Traveller's concluding fragment, indicates with sufficient clearness that Hooker was not advocating transubstantiation. "If on all sides it be confessed that the grace of baptism is poured into the soul of man; that by water we receive it, although *it be neither* seated in the water nor the water changed into it, what should induce men to think *that the grace of the Eucharist must needs be in the Eucharist before it be in us that receive it.*" One would be tempted almost to call the hardihood which could produce two fragments divided by such a sentence as this, and write them

into the semblance of a testimony for Roman doctrine, an instance of boldness having few parallels; but in the Church of Rome there are many such. There appears too, under the influence of that Church, to be a uniformity of falsification, which but for the miracles which characterize it, would seem unaccountable; Doctor Milner, in his *End of Controversy*, having mangled and misassorted the sentences with precisely the same happy rashness as the Irish Gentleman.

“When these things do so conjointly meet,” &c.

APPENDIX III.

Conc. Trid. Sess. 22, Dec. de Obs.

“Since the many things, whether through infelicity of the times, or neglect of men and their improbity, appear to have crept in, which are alien from the dignity of so great a sacrifice, &c. &c. the holy Synod decrees, that bishops, &c. &c. shall take away whatever either avarice, the service of idols, or irreverence which can scarcely be separated from impiety, or superstition, the spurious counterfeit of true piety, has introduced.”

THE END.

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